THOUGHTS

ON

THE CAUSE

OF THE PRESENT

DISCONTENTS.

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CAPTCHA

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OF THE PRESENT

DISCONTENTS.

Hoc vero occultum, inteſtinum, domeſticum malum, non modo non exiſtit, verum etiam oprimit, antequam perſpicere atque explorare potueris. Cic.

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PROPERTY OF

THOUGHTS

ON

THE CAUSE

OF THE PRESENT

DISCONTENTS.

IT is an undertaking of ſome degree of delicacy to examine into the cauſe of public diſorders. If a man happens not to ſucceed in ſuch an enquiry, hewill be thought weak and viſionary; if he touches the true grievance, there is a danger that he may come near to perſons of weight and conſequence, who will rather be exaſperated at the diſcovery of their errors, than thankful for the occaſion of correcting them. If he ſhould be obliged to blame the favourites of the people, he will be conſidered as the tool of power; if he cenſures thoſe in power, he will

be looked on as an inſtrument of faction. But in all exertions of duty ſomething is to be hazarded. In caſes of tumult and diſorder, our law has inveſted every man, in ſome ſort, with the authority of a magiſtrate. When the affairs of the nation are diſtracted, private people are, by the ſpirit of that law, juſtified in ſtepping a little out of their ordinary ſphere. They enjoy a privilege, of ſomewhat more dignity and effect, than that of idle lamentation over the calamities of their country. They may look into them narrowly; they may reaſon upon them liberally; and if they ſhould be ſo fortunate as to diſcover the true ſource of the miſchief, and to ſuggeſt any probable method of removing it, though they may diſpleaſe the rulers for the day, they are certainly of ſervice to the cauſe of Government. Government is deeply intereſted in every thing which, even through the medium of ſome temporary uneaſineſs, may tend finally to compoſe the minds of the ſubject, and to conciliate their affections. I have nothing to do here with the abſtract value of the voice of the people. But as long as reputation, the moſt precious poſſeſſion of every individual, and as long as opinion, the great ſupport of the State, depend entirely upon that voice, it can never be conſidered as a thing of little conſequence either to individuals or to Government. Nations are not primarily ruled by laws; leſs by violence. Whatever original energy may be ſuppoſed either in force or regulation; the operation of both is, in truth, merely inſtrumental. Nations are governed

governed by the ſame methods, and on the ſame principles, by which an individual without authority is often able to govern thoſe who are his equals or his ſuperiours; by a knowledge of their temper, and by a judicious management of it; I mean, whenever public affairs are ſteadily and quietly conducted; not when Government is nothing but a continued ſcuffle between the magiſtrate and the multitude; in which ſometimes the one and ſome times the other is uppermoſt; in which they alternately yield and prevail in a ſeries of contemptible victories and ſcandalous ſubmiſſions. The temper of the people amongſt whom he preſides ought therefore to be the firſt ſtudy of a Stateſman. And the knowledge of this temper it is by no means impoſſible for him to attain, if he has not an intereſt in being ignorant of what it is his duty to learn.

To complain of the age we live in, to murmur at the preſent poſſeſſors of power, to lament the paſt, to conceive extravagant hopes of the future, are the common diſpoſitions of the greateſt part of mankind; indeed the neceſſary effects of the ignorance and levity of the vulgar. Such complaints and humours have exiſted in all times; yet as all times have *not* been alike, true political ſagacity manifeſts itſelf, in diſtinguiſhing that complaint, which only characterizes the general infirmity of human nature, from thoſe which are ſymptoms of the particular diſtemperature of our own air and ſeaſon.

Nobody, I believe, will conſider it merely as the language of ſpleen or diſappointment, if I ſay, that there is ſomething particularly alarming in the preſent conjuncture. There is hardly a man in or out of power who holds any other language. That Government is at once dreaded and contemned; that the laws are deſpoiled of all their reſpected and ſalutary terrors; that their inaction is a ſubject of ridicule, and their exertion of abhorrence; that rank, and office, and title, and all the ſolemn plauſibilities of the world, have loſt their reverence and effect; that our foreign politicks are as much deranged as our domeſtic oeconomy; that our dependencies are ſlackened in their affection, and looſened from their obedience; that we know neither how to yield nor how to inforce; that hardly any thing above or below, abroad or at home, is ſound and entire; but that diſconnexion and confuſion, in offices, in parties, in families, in Parliament, in the nation, prevail beyond the diſorders of any former time: theſe are facts univerſally admitted and lamented.

This ſtate of things is the more extraordinary, becauſe the great parties which formerly divided and agitated the kingdom are known to be in a manner entirely diſſolved. No great external calamity has viſited the nation; no peſtilence or famine. We do not labour at preſent under any ſcheme of taxation new or oppreſſive in the quantity or in the mode. Nor are we engaged in unſucceſsful war; in which, our miſfortunes might eaſily pervert our judgement;

and

and our minds, ſore from the loſs of national glory, might feel every blow of Fortune as a crime in Government.

It is impoſſible that the cauſe of this ſtrange diſtemper ſhould not ſometimes become a ſubject of diſcourſe. It is a compliment due, and which I willingly pay, to thoſe who adminiſter our affairs, to take notice in the firſt place of their ſpeculation. Our Miniſters are of opinion, that the increaſe of our trade and manufactures, that our growth by colonization and by conqueſt, have concurred to accumulate immenſe wealth in the hands of ſome individuals; and this again being diſperſed amongſt the people, has rendered them univerſally proud, ferocious, and ungovernable; that the inſolence of ſome from their enormous wealth, and the boldneſs of others from a guilty poverty, have rendered them capable of the moſt atrocious attempts; ſo that they have trampled upon all ſubordination, and violently born down the unarmed laws of a free Government; barriers too feeble againſt the fury of a populace ſo fierce and licentious as ours. They contend, that no adequate provocation has been given for ſo ſpreading a diſcontent; our affairs having been conducted throughout with remarkable temper and conſummate wiſdom. The wicked induſtry of ſome libellers, joined to the intrigues of a few diſappointed politicians, have, in their opinion, been able to produce this unnatural ferment in the nation.

Nothing indeed can be more unnatural than the preſent convulſions of this country, if the

above account be a true one. I confeſs I ſhall aſſent to it with great reluctance, and only on the compulſion of the cleareſt and firmeſt proofs; becauſe their account reſolves itſelf into this ſhort, but diſcouraging propoſition, "That we "have a very good Miniſtry, but that we are a "very bad people;" that we ſet ourſelves to bite the hand that feeds us; that with a malignant inſanity we oppoſe the meaſures, and ungrateſully vilify the perſons of thoſe, whoſe ſole object is our own peace and proſperity. If a few puny libellers, acting under a knot of factious politicians, without virtue, parts, or character (ſuch they are conſtantly repreſented by theſe gentlemen), are ſufficient to excite this diſturbance, very perverſe muſt be the diſpoſition of that people, amongſt whom ſuch a diſturbance can be excited by ſuch means. It is beſides no ſmall aggravation of the public misfortune, that the diſeaſe, on this hypotheſis, appears to be without remedy. If the wealth of the nation be the cauſe of its turbulence, I imagine, it is not propoſed to introduce poverty, as a conſtable to keep the peace. If our dominions abroad are the roots which feed all this rank luxuriance of ſedition, it is not intended to cut them off in order to famiſh the fruit. If our liberty has enfeebled the executive power, there is no deſign, I hope, to call in the aid of deſpotiſm, to fill up the deficiencies of law. Whatever may be intended, theſe things are not yet profeſſed. We ſeem therefore to be driven to abſolute deſpair; for we have no other materials to work

work upon, but thoſe out of which God has been pleaſed to form the inhabitants of this iſland. If theſe be radically and eſſentially vitious, all that can be ſaid is, that thoſe men are very unhappy, to whoſe fortune or duty it falls to adminiſter the affairs of this untoward people. I hear it indeed ſometimes aſſerted, that a ſteady perſeverance in the preſent meaſures, and a rigorous puniſhment of thoſe who oppoſe them, will in courſe of time infallibly put an end to theſe diſorders. But this, in my opinion, is ſaid without much obſervation of our preſent diſpoſition, and without any knowledge at all of the general nature of mankind. If the matter of which this nation is compoſed be ſo very fermentable as theſe gentlemen deſcribe it, leaven never will be wanting to work it up, as long as diſcontent, revenge, and ambition, have exiſtence in the world. Particular puniſhments are the cure for accidental diſtempers in the State; they inflame rather than allay thoſe heats which ariſe from the ſettled miſmanagement of the Government, or from a natural ill diſpoſition in the people. It is of the utmoſt moment not to make miſtakes in the uſe of ſtrong meaſures; and firmneſs is then only a virtue when it accompanies the moſt perfect wiſdom. In truth, inconſtancy is a ſort of natural corrective of folly and ignorance.

I am not one of thoſe who think that the people are never in the wrong. They have been ſo, frequently and outrageouſly, both in other countries and in this. But I do ſay, that in all

diſputes between them and their rulers, the preſumption is at leaſt upon a par in favour of the people. Experience may perhaps juſtify me in going further. Where popular diſcontents have been very prevalent; it may well be affirmed and ſupported, that there has been generally ſomething found amiſs in the conſtitution, or in the conduct of Government. The people have no intereſt in diſorder. When they do wrong, it is their error, and not their crime. But with the governing part of the State, it is far otherwiſe. They certainly may act ill by deſign, as well as by miſtake. "*Les revolutions* "*qui arrivent dans les grands etats ne ſont point* "*un effect du hazard, ni du caprice des peuples.* "*Rien ne revolte* les grands *d'un royaume* "*comme* un Gouvernement foible et derangé. "*Pour la* populace, *ce n'eſt jamais par envie* "*d'attaquer qu'elle ſe ſouleve, mais par impatience* "*de ſouffrir* *." Theſe are the words of a great man; of a Miniſter of ſtate; and a zealous aſſertor of Monarchy. They are applied to the *ſyſtem of Favouritiſm* which was adopted by Henry the Third of France, and to the dreadful conſequences it produced. What he ſays of revolutions, is equally true of all great diſturbances. If this preſumption in favour of the ſubjects againſt the truſtees of power be not the more probable, I am ſure it is the more comfortable ſpeculation; becauſe it is more eaſy to change an adminiſtration than to reform a people.

* Mem. de Sully, vol. I. p. 133.

Upon

Upon a ſuppoſition, therefore, that in the opening of the cauſe the preſumptions ſtand equally balanced between the parties, there ſeems ſufficient ground to entitle any perſon to a fair hearing, who attempts ſome other ſcheme beſides that eaſy one which is faſhionable in ſome faſhionable companies, to account for the preſent diſcontents. It is not to be argued that we endure no grievance, becauſe our grievances are not of the ſame ſort with thoſe under which we laboured formerly; not preciſely thoſe which we bore from the Tudors, or vindicated on the Stuarts. A great change has taken place in the affairs of this country. For in the ſilent lapſe of events as material alterations have been inſenſibly brought about in the policy and character of governments and nations, as thoſe which have been marked by the tumult of public revolutions.

It is very rare indeed for men to be wrong in their feelings concerning public miſconduct; as rare to be right in their ſpeculation upon the cauſe of it. I have conſtantly obſerved, that the generality of people are fifty years, at leaſt, behind-hand in their politicks. There are but very few, who are capable of comparing and digeſting what paſſes before their eyes at different times and occaſions, ſo as to form the whole into a diſtinct ſyſtem. But in books every thing is ſettled for them, without the exertion of any conſiderable diligence or ſagacity. For which reaſon men are wiſe with but little reflexion, and good with little ſelf-

denial,

denial, in the buſineſs of all times except their own. We are very uncorrupt and tolerably enlightened judges of the tranſactions of paſt ages; where no paſſions deceive, and where the whole train of circumſtances, from the trifling cauſe to the tragical event, is ſet in an orderly ſeries before us. Few are the partizans of departed tyranny; and to be a Whig on the buſineſs of an hundred years ago, is very conſiſtent with every advantage of preſent ſervility. This retroſpective wiſdom, and hiſtorical patriotiſm, are things of wonderful convenience; and ſerve admirably to reconcile the old quarrel between ſpeculation and practice. Many a ſtern republican, after gorging himſelf with a full feaſt of admiration of the Grecian commonwealths and of our true Saxon conſtitution, and diſcharging all the ſplendid bile of his virtuous indignation on King John and King James, ſits down perfectly ſatisfied to the coarſeſt work and homelieſt job of the day he lives in. I believe there was no profeſſed admirer of Henry the Eighth among the inſtruments of the laſt King James; nor in the court of Henry the Eighth, was there, I dare ſay, to be found a ſingle advocate for the favourites of Richard the Second.

No complaiſance to our Court, or to our age, can make me believe nature to be ſo changed, but that public liberty will be among us, as among our anceſtors, obnoxious to ſome perſon or other; and that opportunities will be furniſhed, for attempting at leaſt, ſome alteration to the prejudice of our conſtitution. Theſe

attempts

attempts will naturally vary in their mode according to times and circumſtances. For ambition, though it has ever the ſame general views, has not at all times the ſame means, nor the ſame particular objects. A great deal of the furniture of ancient tyranny is worn to rags; the reſt is entirely out of faſhion. Beſides, there are few Stateſmen ſo very clumſy and awkward in their buſineſs, as to fall into the identical ſnare which has proved fatal to their predeceſſors. When an arbitrary impoſition is attempted upon the ſubject, undoubtedly it will not bear on its fore-head the name of *Ship-money*. There is no danger that an extenſion of the *Foreſt laws* ſhould be the choſen mode of oppreſſion in this age. And when we hear any inſtance of miniſterial rapacity, to the prejudice of the rights of private life, it will certainly not be the exaction of two hundred pullets, from a woman of faſhion, for leave to lye with her own huſband *.

Every age has its own manners, and its politicks dependent upon them; and the ſame attempts will not be made againſt a conſtitution fully formed and matured, that were uſed to deſtroy it in the cradle, or to reſiſt its growth during its infancy.

Againſt the being of Parliament, I am ſatisfied, no deſigns have ever been entertained ſince the

* "Uxor Hugonis de Nevill dat Domino Regi ducentas "Gallinas, eo quod poſſit jacere una nocte cum Domino "ſuo Hugone de Nevili." Maddox, Hiſt. Exch. c. xiii. p. 326.

Revolution. Every one muſt perceive, that it is ſtrongly the intereſt of the Court, to have ſome ſecond cauſe interpoſed between the Miniſters and the people. The gentlemen of the Houſe of Commons have an intereſt equally ſtrong, in ſuſtaining the part of that intermediate cauſe. However they may hire out the *uſufruct* of their voices, they never will part with the *fee and inheritance*. Accordingly thoſe who have been of the moſt known devotion to the will and pleaſure of a Court, have at the ſame time been moſt forward in aſſerting an high authority in the Houſe of Commons. When they knew who were to uſe that authority, and how it was to be employed, they thought it never could be carried too far. It muſt be always the wiſh of an unconſtitutional Stateſman, that an Houſe of Commons who are entirely dependent upon him, ſhould have every right of the people entirely dependent upon their pleaſure. It was ſoon diſcovered, that the forms of a free, and the ends of an arbitrary Government, were things not altogether incompatible.

The power of the Crown, almoſt dead and rotten as Prerogative, has grown up anew, with much more ſtrength, and far leſs odium, under the name of Influence. An influence, which operated without noiſe and without violence, an influence which converted the very antagoniſt, into the inſtrument, of power, which contained in itſelf a perpetual principle of growth and renovation, and which the diſtreſſes and the proſperity of the country equally tended to aug-

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ment, was an admirable ſubſtitute for a Prerogative, that being only the offspring of antiquated prejudices, had moulded in its original ſtamina irreſiſtible principles of decay and diſſolution. The ignorance of the people is a bottom but for a temporary ſyſtem; the intereſt of active men in the State is a foundation perpetual and infallible. However, ſome circumſtances, ariſing, it muſt be confeſſed, in a great degree from accident, prevented the effects of this influence for a long time from breaking out in a manner capable of exciting any ſerious apprehenſions. Although Government was ſtrong and flouriſhed exceedingly, the *Court* had drawn far leſs advantage than one would imagine from this great ſource of power.

At the Revolution, the Crown, deprived, for the ends of the Revolution itſelf, of many prerogatives, was found too weak to ſtruggle againſt all the difficulties which preſſed ſo new and unſettled a Government. The Court was obliged therefore to delegate a part of its powers to men of ſuch intereſt as could ſupport, and of ſuch fidelity as would adhere to, its eſtabliſhment. Such men were able to draw in a greater number to a concurrence in the common defence. This connexion, neceſſary at firſt, continued long after convenient; and properly conducted might indeed, in all ſituations, be an uſeful inſtrument of Government. At the ſame time, through the intervention of men of popular weight and character, the people poſſeſſed a ſecurity for their juſt portion of im-

portance

portance in the State. But as the title to the Crown grew ſtronger by long poſſeſſion, and by the conſtant increaſe of its influence, theſe helps have of late ſeemed to certain perſons no better than incumbrances. The powerful managers for Government, were not ſufficiently ſubmiſſive to the pleaſure of the poſſeſſors of immediate and perſonal favour, ſometimes from a confidence in their own ſtrength natural and acquired; ſometimes from a fear of offending their friends, and weakening that lead in the country, which gave them a conſideration independent of the Court. Men acted as if the Court could receive, as well as confer, an obligation. The influence of Government, thus divided in appearance between the Court and the leaders of parties, became in many caſes an acceſſion rather to the popular than to the royal ſcale; and ſome part of that influence which would otherwiſe have been poſſeſſed as in a ſort of mortmain and unalienable domain, returned again to the great ocean from whence it aroſe, and circulated among the people. This method therefore of governing, by men of great natural intereſt or great acquired conſideration, was viewed in a very invidious light by the true lovers of abſolute monarchy. It is the nature of deſpotiſm to abhor power held by any means but its own momentary pleaſure; and to annihilate all intermediate ſituations between boundleſs ſtrength on its own part, and total debility on the part of the people.

To get rid of all this intermediate and independent importance, and *to ſecure to the Court the unlimited and uncontrolled uſe of its own vaſt influence, under the ſole direction of its own private favour*, has for ſome years paſt been the great object of policy. If this were compaſſed, the influence of the Crown muſt of courſe produce all the effects which the moſt ſanguine partizans of the Court could poſſibly deſire. Government might then be carried on without any concurrence on the part of the people; without any attention to the dignity of the greater, or to the affections of the lower ſorts. A new project was therefore deviſed, by a certain ſet of intriguing men, totally different from the ſyſtem of Adminiſtration which had prevailed ſince the acceſſion of the Houſe of Brunſwick. This project, I have heard, was firſt conceived by ſome perſons in the court of Frederick Prince of Wales.

The earlieſt attempt in the execution of this deſign was to ſet up for Miniſter, a perſon, in rank indeed reſpectable, and very ample in fortune; but who, to the moment of this vaſt and ſudden elevation, was little known or conſidered in the kingdom. To him the whole nation was to yield an immediate and implicit ſubmiſſion. But whether it was for want of firmneſs to bear up againſt the firſt oppoſition; or that things were not yet fully ripened, or that this method was not found the moſt eligible; that idea was ſoon abandoned. The inſtrumental part of the project was a little altered,

to accommodate it to the time, and to bring things more gradually and more ſurely to the one great end propoſed.

The firſt part of the reformed plan was to draw *a line which ſhould ſeparate the Court from the Miniſtry*. Hitherto theſe names had been looked upon as ſynonymous; but for the future, Court and Adminiſtration were to be conſidered as things totally diſtinct. By this operation, two ſyſtems of Adminiſtration were to be formed; one which ſhould be in the real ſecret and confidence; the other merely oſtenſible, to perform the official and executory duties of Government. The latter were alone to be reſponſible; whilſt the real adviſers, who enjoyed all the power, were effectually removed from all the danger.

Secondly, *A party under theſe leaders was to be formed in favour of the Court againſt the Miniſtry:* this party was to have a large ſhare in the emoluments of Government, and to hold it totally ſeparate from, and independent of, oſtenſible Adminiſtration.

The third point, and that on which the ſucceſs of the whole ſcheme ultimately depended, was *to bring Parliament to an acquieſcence in this project*. Parliament was therefore to be taught by degrees a total indifference to the perſons, rank, influence, abilities, connexions, and character, of the Miniſters of the Crown. By means of a diſcipline, on which I ſhall ſay more hereafter, that body was to be habituated to the moſt oppoſite intereſts, and the moſt diſcordant

politicks.

politicks. All connexions and dependencies among ſubjects were to be entirely diſſolved. As hitherto buſineſs had gone through the hands of leaders of Whigs or Tories, men of talents to conciliate the people, and to engage their confidence, now the method was to be altered; and the lead was to be given to men of no ſort of conſideration or credit in the country. This want of natural importance was to be their very title to delegated power. Members of Parliament were to be hardened into an inſenſibility to pride as well as to duty. Thoſe high and haughty ſentiments, which are the great ſupport of independence, were to be let down gradually. Point of honour and precedence were no more to be regarded in Parliamentary decorum, than in a Turkiſh army. It was to be avowed as a conſtitutional maxim, that the King might appoint one of his footmen, or one of your footmen, for Miniſter; and that he ought to be, and that he would be, as well followed as the firſt name for rank or wiſdom in the nation. Thus Parliament was to look on, as if perfectly unconcerned; while a cabal of the cloſet and back-ſtairs was ſubſtituted in the place of a national Adminiſtration.

With ſuch a degree of acquieſcence, any meaſure of any Court might well be deemed thoroughly ſecure. The capital objects, and by much the moſt flattering characteriſticks of arbitrary power, would be obtained. Every thing would be drawn from its holdings in the country to the perſonal favour and inclination of the

Prince. This favour would be the ſole introduction to power, and the only tenure by which it was to be held: ſo that no perſon looking towards another, and all looking towards the Court, it was impoſſible but that the motive which ſolely influenced every man's hopes muſt come in time to govern every man's conduct; till at laſt the ſervility became univerſal, in ſpite of the dead letter of any laws or inſtitutions whatſoever.

How it ſhould happen that any man could be tempted to venture upon ſuch a project of Government, may at firſt view appear ſurprizing. But the fact is, that opportunities very inviting to ſuch an attempt have offered; and the ſcheme itſelf was not deſtitute of ſome arguments not wholly unplauſible to recommend it. Theſe opportunities and theſe arguments, the uſe that has been made of both, the plan for carrying this new ſcheme of government into execution, and the effects which it has produced, are in my opinion worthy of our ſerious conſideration.

His Majeſty came to the throne of theſe kingdoms with more advantages than any of his predeceſſors ſince the Revolution. Fourth in deſcent, and third in ſucceſſion of his Royal family, even the zealots of hereditary right, in him, ſaw ſomething to flatter their favourite prejudices; and to juſtify a transfer of their attachments, without a change in their principles. The perſon and cauſe of the Pretender were become contemptible; his title diſowned throughout Europe, his party diſbanded in England.

His

His Majeſty came indeed to the inheritance of a mighty war; but, victorious in every part of the globe, peace was always in his power, not to negociate, but to dictate. No foreign habitudes or attachments withdrew him from the cultivation of his power at home. His revenue for the civil eſtabliſhment, fixed (as it was then thought) at a large, but definite ſum, was ample, without being invidious. His influence, by additions from conqueſts, by an augmentation of debt, by an increaſe of military and naval eſtabliſhment, much ſtrengthened and extended. And coming to the throne in the prime and full vigour of youth, as from affection there was a ſtrong diſlike, ſo from dread there ſeemed to be a general averſeneſs, from giving any thing like offence to a Monarch, againſt whoſe reſentment oppoſition could not look for a refuge in any ſort of reverſionary hope.

Theſe ſingular advantages inſpired his Majeſty only with a more ardent deſire to preſerve unimpaired the ſpirit of that national freedom, to which he owed a ſituation ſo full of glory. But to others it ſuggeſted ſentiments of a very different nature. They thought they now beheld an opportunity (by a certain ſort of Stateſmen never long undiſcovered or unemployed) of drawing to themſelves, by the aggrandiſement of a Court faction, a degree of power which they could never hope to derive from natural influence or from honourable ſervice; and which it was impoſſible they could hold with the leaſt ſecurity, whilſt the ſyſtem of Adminiſtration

reſted upon its former bottom. In order to facilitate the execution of their deſign, it was neceſſary to make many alterations in political arrangement, and a ſignal change in the opinions, habits, and connexions of the greateſt part of thoſe who acted then in publick.

In the firſt place, they proceeded gradually, but not ſlowly, to deſtroy every thing of ſtrength which did not derive its principal nouriſhment from the immediate pleaſure of the Court. The greateſt weight of popular opinion and party connexion were then with the Duke of Newcaſtle and Mr. Pitt. Neither of theſe held their importance by the *new tenure* of the Court; they were not therefore thought to be ſo proper as others for the ſervices which were required by that tenure. It happened very favourably for the new ſyſtem, that under a forced coalition there rankled an incurable alienation and diſguſt between the parties which compoſed the Adminiſtration. Mr. Pitt was firſt attacked. Not ſatisfied with removing him from power, they endeavoured by various artifices to ruin his character. The other party ſeemed rather pleaſed to get rid of ſo oppreſſive a ſupport; not perceiving, that their own fall was prepared by his, and involved in it. Many other reaſons prevented them from daring to look their true ſituation in the face. To the great Whig families it was extremely diſagreeable, and ſeemed almoſt unnatural, to oppoſe the Adminiſtration of a Prince of the Houſe of Brunſwick. Day after day they heſitated, and doubted, and lingered, expecting

expecting that other counſels would take place; and were ſlow to be perſuaded, that all which had been done by the Cabal, was the effect not of humour, but of ſyſtem. It was more ſtrongly and evidently the intereſt of the new Court faction, to get rid of the great Whig connexions, than to deſtroy Mr. Pitt. The power of that gentleman was vaſt indeed and merited; but it was in a great degree perſonal, and therefore tranſient. Theirs was rooted in the country. For, with a good deal leſs of popularity, they poſſeſſed a far more natural and fixed influence. Long poſſeſſion of Government, vaſt property, obligations of favours given and received, connexion of office, ties of blood, of alliance, of friendſhip (things at that time ſuppoſed of ſome force), the name of Whig, dear to the majority of the people, the zeal early begun and ſteadily continued to the Royal Family; all theſe together formed a body of power in the nation, which was criminal and devoted. The great ruling principle of the Cabal, and that which animated and harmonized all their proceedings, how various ſoever they may have been, was to ſignify to the world, that the Court would proceed upon its own proper forces only; and that the pretence of bringing any other into its ſervice was an affront to it, and not a ſupport. Therefore, when the chiefs were removed, in order to go to the root, the whole party was put under a proſcription, ſo general and ſevere as to take their hard-earned bread from the loweſt officers, in a manner which had never been

known before, even in general revolutions. But it was thought neceſſary effectually to deſtroy all dependencies but one; and to ſhew an example of the firmneſs and rigour with which the new ſyſtem was to be ſupported.

Thus for the time were pulled down, in the perſons of the Whig leaders and of Mr. Pitt (in ſpite of the ſervices of the one at the acceſſion of the Royal Family, and the recent ſervices of the other in the war), the *two only ſecurities for the importance of the people*; *power ariſing from popularity*; *and power ariſing from connexion*. Here and there indeed a few individuals were left ſtanding, who gave ſecurity for their total eſtrangement from the odious principles of party connexion and perſonal attachment; and it muſt be confeſſed that moſt of them have religiouſly kept their faith. Such a change could not however be made without a mighty ſhock to Government.

To reconcile the minds of the people to all theſe movements, principles correſpondent to them had been preached up with great zeal. Every one muſt remember that the Cabal ſet out with the moſt aſtoniſhing prudery, both moral and political. Thoſe who in a few months after ſouſed over head and ears into the deepeſt and dirtieſt pits of corruption, cried out violently againſt the indirect practices in the electing and managing of Parliaments, which had formerly prevailed. This marvellous abhorrence which the Court had ſuddenly taken to all influence, was not only circulated in converſation through

the kingdom, but pompouſly announced to the publick, with many other extraordinary things, in a pamphlet * which had all the appearance of a manifeſto preparatory to ſome conſiderable enterprize. Throughout, it was a ſatire, though in terms managed and decent enough, on the politicks of the former Reign. It was indeed written with no ſmall art and addreſs.

In this piece appeared the firſt dawning of the new ſyſtem; there firſt appeared the idea (then only in ſpeculation) of *ſeparating the Court from the Adminiſtration*; of carrying every thing from national connexion to perſonal regards; and of forming a regular party for that purpoſe, under the name of *King's men*.

To recommend this ſyſtem to the people, a perſpective view of the Court gorgeouſly painted, and finely illuminated from within, was exhibited to the gaping multitude. Party was to be totally done away, with all its evil works. Corruption was to be caſt down from Court, as *Atè* was from Heaven. Power was thenceforward to be the choſen reſidence of public ſpirit; and no one was to be ſuppoſed under any ſiniſter influence, except thoſe who had the misfortune to be in diſgrace at Court, which was to ſtand in lieu of all vices and all corruptions. A ſcheme of perfection to be realized in a Monarchy far beyond the viſionary Republick of Plato. The whole ſcenery was exactly diſpoſed to captivate thoſe good ſouls, whoſe credulous morality is ſo invaluable a treaſure to crafty

* Sentiments of an honeſt Man.

politicians. Indeed there was wherewithall to charm every body, except thoſe few who are not much pleaſed with profeſſions of ſupernatural virtue, who know of what ſtuff ſuch profeſſions are made, for what purpoſes they are deſigned, and in what they are ſure conſtantly to end. Many innocent gentlemen, who had been talking proſe all their lives without knowing any thing of the matter, began at laſt to open their eyes upon their own merits, and to attribute their not having been Lords of the Treaſury and Lords of Trade many years before merely to the prevalence of party, and to the Miniſterial power, which had fruſtrated the good intentions of the Court in favour of their abilities. Now was the time to unlock the ſealed fountain of Royal bounty, which had been infamouſly monopolized and huckſtered, and to let it flow at large upon the whole people. The time was come, to reſtore Royalty to its original ſplendour. *Mettre le Roy hors de page*, became a ſort of watch-word. And it was conſtantly in the mouths of all the runners of the Court, that nothing could preſerve the balance of the conſtitution from being overturned by the rabble, or by a faction of the nobility, but to free the Sovereign effectually from that Miniſterial tyranny under which the Royal dignity had been oppreſſed in the perſon of his Majeſty's grandfather.

Theſe were ſome of the many artifices uſed to reconcile the people to the great change which was made in the perſons who compoſed the

the Miniſtry, and the ſtill greater which was made and avowed in its conſtitution. As to individuals, other methods were employed with them; in order ſo thoroughly to diſunite every party, and even every family, that *no concert, order, or effect, might appear in any future oppoſition.* And in this manner an Adminiſtration without connexion with the people, or with one another, was firſt put in poſſeſſion of Government. What good effects followed from it, we have all ſeen; whether with regard to virtue, public or private; to the eaſe and happineſs of the Sovereign; or to the real ſtrength of Government. But as ſo much ſtreſs was then laid on the neceſſity of this new project, it will not be amiſs to take a view of the effects of this Royal ſervitude and vile durance, which was ſo deplored in the reign of the late Monarch, and was ſo carefully to be avoided in the reign of his Succeſſor. The effects were theſe.

In times full of doubt and danger to his perſon and family, George the Second maintained the dignity of his Crown connected with the liberty of his people, not only unimpaired, but improved, for the ſpace of thirty three years. He overcame a dangerous rebellion, abetted by foreign force, and raging in the heart of his kingdoms; and thereby deſtroyed the ſeeds of all future rebellion that could ariſe upon the ſame principle. He carried the glory, the power, the commerce of England, to an height unknown even to this renowned nation in the times of its greateſt proſperity; and he left his ſucceſſion

ſucceſſion reſting on the true and only true foundations of all national and all regal greatneſs; affection at home, reputation abroad, truſt in allies, terror in rival nations. The moſt ardent lover of his country cannot wiſh for Great Britain an happier fate than to continue as ſhe was then left. A people emulous as we are in affection to our preſent Sovereign, know not how to form a prayer to Heaven for a greater bleſſing upon his virtues, or an higher ſtate of felicity and glory, than that, that he ſhould live, and ſhould reign, and, when Providence ordains it, ſhould die, exactly like his illuſtrious Predeceſſor.

A great Prince may be obliged (though ſuch a thing cannot happen very often) to ſacrifice his private inclination to his public intereſt. A wiſe Prince will not think that ſuch a reſtraint implies a condition of ſervility; and truly, if ſuch was the condition of the laſt reign, and the effects were alſo ſuch as we have deſcribed, we ought, no leſs for the ſake of the Sovereign whom we love, than for our own, to hear arguments convincing indeed, before we depart from the maxims of that reign, or fly in the face of this great body of ſtrong and recent experience.

One of the principal topicks which was then, and has been ſince, much employed by that political * ſchool, is an affected terror of the growth of an ariſtocratic power, prejudicial to

* See the Political Writings of the late Dr. Brown, and many others.

the

the rights of the Crown, and the balance of the conſtitution. Any new powers exerciſed in the Houſe of Lords, or in the Houſe of Commons, or by the Crown, ought certainly to excite the vigilant and anxious jealouſy of a free people. Even a new and unprecedented courſe of action in the whole Legiſlature, without great and evident reaſon, may be a ſubject of juſt uneaſineſs. I will not affirm, that there may not have lately appeared in the Houſe of Lords a diſpoſition to ſome attempts derogatory to the legal rights of the ſubject. If any ſuch have really appeared, they have ariſen, not from a power properly ariſtocratic, but from the ſame influence which is charged with having excited attempts of a ſimilar nature in the Houſe of Commons; which Houſe, if it ſhould have been betrayed into an unfortunate quarrel with its conſtituents, and involved in a charge of the very ſame nature, could have neither power nor inclination to repell ſuch attempts in others. Thoſe attempts in the Houſe of Lords can no more be called ariſtocratic proceedings, than the proceedings with regard to the county of Middleſex in the Houſe of Commons can with any ſenſe be called democratical.

It is true, that the Peers have a great influence in the kingdom, and in every part of the public concerns. While they are men of property, it is impoſſible to prevent it, except by ſuch means as muſt prevent all property from its natural operation; an event not eaſily to be compaſſed, while property is power; or by any means to be wiſhed,

wiſhed, while the leaſt notion exiſts of the method by which the ſpirit of liberty acts, and of the means by which it is preſerved. If any particular Peers, by their uniform, upright, conſtitutional conduct, by their public and their private virtues, have acquired an influence in the country; the people, on whoſe favour that influence depends, and from whom it aroſe, will never be duped into an opinion, that ſuch greatneſs in a Peer is the deſpotiſm of an ariſtocracy, when they know and feel it to be the effect and pledge of their own importance.

I am no friend to ariſtocracy, in the ſenſe at leaſt in which that word is uſually underſtood. If it were not a bad habit to moot caſes on the ſuppoſed ruin of the conſtitution, I ſhould be free to declare, that if it muſt periſh, I would rather by far ſee it reſolved into any other form, than loſt in that auſtere and inſolent domination. But, whatever my diſlikes may be, my fears are not upon that quarter. The queſtion, on the influence of a Court, and of a Peerage, is not, which of the two dangers is the moſt eligible, but which is the moſt imminent. He is but a poor obſerver, who has not ſeen, that the generality of Peers, far from ſupporting themſelves in a ſtate of independent greatneſs, are but too apt to fall into an oblivion of their proper dignity, and to run headlong into an abject ſervitude. Would to God it were true, that the fault of our Peers were too much ſpirit! It is worthy of ſome obſervation, that theſe gentlemen, ſo jealous of ariſtocracy, make no

complaints

complaints of the power of thoſe Peers (neither few nor inconſiderable) who are always in the train of a Court, and whoſe whole weight muſt be conſidered as a portion of the ſettled influence of the Crown. This is all ſafe and right: but if ſome Peers (I am very ſorry they are not as many as they ought to be) ſet themſelves, in the great concern of Peers and Commons, againſt a back-ſtairs influence and clandeſtine government, then the alarm begins; then the conſtitution is in danger of being forced into an ariſtocracy.

I reſt a little the longer on this Court topick, becauſe it was much inſiſted upon at the time of the great change, and has been ſince frequently revived by many of the agents of that party: for, whilſt they are terrifying the great and opulent with the horrors of mob-government, they are by other managers attempting (though hitherto with little ſucceſs) to alarm the people with the phantom of the tyranny of the Nobles. All this is done upon their favourite principle of diſunion, of ſowing jealouſies amongſt the different orders of the State, and of disjointing the natural ſtrength of the kingdom; that it may be rendered incapable of reſiſting the ſiniſter deſigns of wicked men, who have engroſſed the Royal power.

Thus much of the topicks choſen by the Courtiers to recommend their ſyſtem; it will be neceſſary to open a little more at large the nature of that party which was formed for its ſupport. Without this, the whole would have been

been no better than a viſionary amuſement, like the ſcheme of Harrington's political club, and not a buſineſs in which the nation had a real concern. As a powerful party, and a party conſtructed on a new principle, it is a very inviting object of curioſity.

It muſt be remembered, that ſince the Revolution, until the period we are ſpeaking of, the influence of the Crown had been always employed in ſupporting the Miniſters of State, and in carrying on the public buſineſs according to their opinions. But the party now in queſtion is formed upon a very different idea. It is to intercept the favour, protection and confidence of the Crown in the paſſage to its Miniſters; it is to come between them and their importance in Parliament; it is to ſeparate them from all their natural and acquired dependencies; it is intended as the controul, not the ſupport, of Adminiſtration. The machinery of this ſyſtem is perplexed in its movements, and falſe in its principle. It is formed on a ſuppoſition that the King is ſomething external to his government; and that he may be honoured and aggrandized, even by its debility and diſgrace. The plan proceeds expreſsly on the idea of enfeebling the regular executory power. It proceeds on the idea of weakening the State in order to ſtrengthen the Court. The ſcheme depending intirely on diſtruſt, on diſconnexion, on mutability by principle, on ſyſtematic weakneſs in every particular member; it is impoſſible

that

that the total reſult ſhould be ſubſtantial ſtrength of any kind.

As a foundation of their ſcheme, the Cabal have eſtabliſhed a ſort of *Rota* in the Court. All ſorts of parties, by this means, have been brought into Adminiſtration, from whence few have had the good fortune to eſcape without diſgrace; none at all without conſiderable loſſes. In the beginning of each arrangement no profeſſions of confidence and ſupport are wanting, to induce the leading men to engage. But while the Miniſters of the day appear in all the pomp and pride of power, while they have all their canvas ſpread out to the wind, and every ſail filled with the fair and proſperous gale of Royal favour, in a ſhort time they find, they know not how, a current, which ſets directly againſt them; which prevents all progreſs; and even drives them backwards. They grow aſhamed and mortified in a ſituation, which, by its vicinity to power, only ſerves to remind them the more ſtrongly of their inſignificance. They are obliged either to execute the orders of their inferiors, or to ſee themſelves oppoſed by the natural inſtruments of their office. With the loſs of their dignity, they loſe their temper. In their turn they grow troubleſome to that Cabal, which, whether it ſupports or oppoſes, equally diſgraces and equally betrays them. It is ſoon found neceſſary to get rid of the heads of Adminiſtration; but it is of the heads only. As there always are many rotten members belonging to the beſt connexions, it is not hard to perſuade

ſuade ſeveral to continue in office without their leaders. By this means the party goes out much thinner than it came in; and is only reduced in ſtrength by its temporary poſſeſſion of power. Beſides, if by accident, or in courſe of changes, that power ſhould be recovered, the Junto have thrown up a retrenchment of theſe carcaſes, which may ſerve to cover themſelves in a day of danger. They conclude, not unwiſely, that ſuch rotten members will become the firſt objects of diſguſt and reſentment to their antient connexions.

They contrive to form in the outward Adminiſtration two parties at the leaſt; which, whilſt they are tearing one another to pieces, are both competitors for the favour and protection of the Cabal; and, by their emulation, contribute to throw every thing more and more into the hands of the interior managers.

A Miniſter of State will ſometimes keep himſelf totally eſtranged from all his collegues; will differ from them in their councils, will privately traverſe, and publicly oppoſe, their meaſures. He will, however, continue in his employment. Inſtead of ſuffering any mark of diſpleaſure, he will be diſtinguiſhed by an unbounded profuſion of Court rewards and careſſes; becauſe he does what is expected, and all that is expected, from men in office. He helps to keep ſome form of Adminiſtration in being, and keeps it at the ſame time as weak and divided as poſſible.

However, we muſt take care not to be miſtaken, or to imagine that ſuch perſons have any

any weight in their oppoſition. When, by them, Adminiſtration is convinced of its inſignificancy, they are ſoon to be convinced of their own. They never are ſuffered to ſucceed in their oppoſition. They and the world are to be ſatisfied, that, neither office, nor authority, nor property, nor ability, eloquence, council, ſkill, or union, are of the leaſt importance; but that the mere influence of the Court, naked of all ſupport, and deſtitute of all management, is abundantly ſufficient for all its own purpoſes.

When any adverſe connexion is to be deſtroyed, the Cabal ſeldom appear in the work themſelves. They find out ſome perſon of whom the party entertains an high opinion. Such a perſon they endeavour to delude with various pretences. They teach him firſt to diſtruſt, and then to quarrel with his friends; among whom, by the ſame arts, they excite a ſimilar diffidence of him; ſo that, in this mutual fear and diſtruſt, he may ſuffer himſelf to be employed as the inſtrument in the change which is brought about. Afterwards they are ſure to deſtroy him in his turn; by ſetting up in his place ſome perſon in whom he had himſelf repoſed the greateſt confidence, and who ſerves to carry off a conſiderable part of his adherents.

When ſuch a perſon has broke in this manner with his connexions, he is ſoon compelled to commit ſome flagrant act of iniquitous perſonal hoſtility againſt ſome of them (ſuch as an attempt to ſtrip a particular friend of his family eſtate), by which the Cabal hope to

render the parties utterly irreconcilable. In truth, they have ſo contrived matters, that people have a greater hatred to the ſubordinate inſtruments than to the principal movers.

As in deſtroying their enemies they make uſe of inſtruments not immediately belonging to their corps, ſo, in advancing their own friends, they purſue exactly the ſame method. To promote any of them to conſiderable rank or emolument, they commonly take care that the recommendation ſhall paſs through the hands of the oſtenſible Miniſtry: ſuch a recommendation might however appear to the world, as ſome proof of the credit of Miniſters, and ſome means of increaſing their ſtrength. To prevent this, the perſons ſo advanced are directed, in all companies, induſtriouſly to declare, that they are under no obligations whatſoever to Adminiſtration; that they have received their office from another quarter; that they are totally free and independent.

When the Faction has any job of lucre to obtain, or of vengeance to perpetrate, their way is, to ſelect, for the execution, thoſe very perſons to whoſe habits, friendſhips, principles, and declarations, ſuch proceedings are publicly known to be the moſt adverſe; at once to render the inſtruments more odious, and therefore the more dependent, and to prevent the people from ever repoſing a confidence in any appearance of private friendſhip, or public principle.

If the Adminiſtration ſeem now and then, from remiſſneſs, or from fear of making themſelves diſagreeable, to ſuffer any popular exceſſes to go unpuniſhed, the Cabal immediately ſets up ſome creature of theirs to raiſe a clamour againſt the Miniſters, as having ſhamefully betrayed the dignity of Government. Then they compel the Miniſtry to become active in conferring rewards and honours on the perſons who have been the inſtruments of their diſgrace; and, after having firſt vilified them with the higher orders for ſuffering the laws to ſleep over the licentiouſneſs of the populace, they drive them (in order to make amends for their former inactivity) to ſome act of atrocious violence, which renders them completely abhorred by the people. They who remember the riots which attended the Middleſex Election; the opening of the preſent Parliament; and the tranſactions relative to Saint George's Fields, will not be at a loſs for an application of theſe remarks.

That this body may be enabled to compaſs all the ends of its inſtitution, its members are ſcarcely ever to aim at the high and reſponſible offices of the State. They are diſtributed with art and judgement through all the ſecondary, but efficient, departments of office, and through the houſeholds of all the branches of the Royal Family: ſo as on one hand to occupy all the avenues to the Throne; and on the other to forward or fruſtrate the execution of any meaſure, according to their own intereſts. For

with the credit and ſupport which they are known to have, though for the greater part in places which are only a genteel excuſe for ſalary, they poſſeſs all the influence of the higheſt poſts; and they dictate publicly in almoſt every thing, even with a parade of ſuperiority. Whenever they diſſent (as it often happens) from their nominal leaders, the trained part of the Senate, inſtinctively in the ſecret, is ſure to follow them; provided the leaders, ſenſible of their ſituation, do not of themſelves recede in time from their moſt declared opinions. This latter is generally the caſe. It will not be conceivable to any who has not ſeen it, what pleaſure is taken by the Cabal in rendering theſe heads of office throughly contemptible and ridiculous. And when they are become ſo, they have then the beſt chance for being well ſupported.

The members of the Court Faction are fully indemnified for not holding places on the ſlippery heights of the kingdom, not only by the lead in all affairs, but alſo by the perfect ſecurity in which they enjoy leſs conſpicuous, but very advantageous ſituations. Their places are, in expreſs legal tenure, or in effect, all of them for life. Whilſt the firſt and moſt reſpectable perſons in the kingdom are toſſed about like tennis balls, the ſport of a blind and inſolent caprice, no Miniſter dares even to caſt an oblique glance at the loweſt of their body. If an attempt be made upon one of this corps, immediately he flies to ſanctuary, and pretends to the moſt inviolable of all promiſes. No conveniency of

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public arrangement is available to remove any of them from the ſpecific ſituation he holds; and the ſlighteſt attempt upon one of them, by the moſt powerful Miniſter, is a certain preliminary to his own deſtruction.

Conſcious of their independence, they bear themſelves with a lofty air to the exterior Miniſters. Like Janiſſaries, they derive a kind of freedom from the very condition of their ſervitude. They may act juſt as they pleaſe; provided they are true to the great ruling principle of their inſtitution. It is, therefore, not at all wonderful, that people ſhould be ſo deſirous of adding themſelves to that body, in which they may poſſeſs and reconcile ſatisfactions the moſt alluring, and ſeemingly the moſt contradictory; enjoying at once all the ſpirited pleaſure of independence, and all the groſs lucre and fat emoluments of ſervitude.

Here is a ſketch, though a ſlight one, of the conſtitution, laws, and policy, of this new Court corporation. The name by which they chuſe to diſtinguiſh themſelves, is that of *King's men*, or the *King's friends*, by an invidious excluſion of the reſt of his Majeſty's moſt loyal and affectionate ſubjects. The whole ſyſtem, comprehending the exterior and interior Adminiſtrations, is commonly called, in the technical language of the Court, *Double Cabinet*; in French or Engliſh, as you chooſe to pronounce it.

Whether all this be a viſion of a diſtracted brain, or the invention of a malicious heart, or a real Faction in the country, muſt be judged

by the appearances which things have worn for eight years paſt. Thus far I am certain, that there is not a ſingle public man, in or out of office, who has not, at ſome time or other, born teſtimony to the truth of what I have now related. In particular, no perſons have been more ſtrong in their aſſertions, and louder and more indecent in their complaints, than thoſe who compoſe all the exterior part of the preſent Adminiſtration; in whoſe time that Faction has arrived at ſuch an height of power, and of boldneſs in the uſe of it, as may, in the end, perhaps bring about its total deſtruction.

It is true, that about four years ago, during the adminiſtration of the Marquis of Rockingham, an attempt was made to carry on Government without their concurrence. However, this was only a tranſient cloud; they were hid but for a moment; and their conſtellation blazed out with greater brightneſs, and a far more vigorous influence, ſome time after it was blown over. An attempt was at that time made (but without any idea of proſcription) to break their corps, to diſcountenance their doctrines, to revive connexions of a different kind, to reſtore the principles and policy of the Whigs, to reanimate the cauſe of Liberty by Miniſterial countenance; and then for the firſt time were men ſeen attached in office to every principle they had maintained in oppoſition. No one will doubt, that ſuch men were abhorred and violently oppoſed by the Court Faction, and that ſuch a ſyſtem could have but a ſhort duration.

It may appear ſomewhat affected, that in ſo much diſcourſe upon this extraordinary Party, I ſhould ſay ſo little of the Earl of Bute, who is the ſuppoſed head of it. But this was neither owing to affectation nor inadvertence. I have carefully avoided the introduction of perſonal reflexions of any kind. Much the greater part of the topicks which have been uſed to blacken this Nobleman, are either unjuſt or frivolous. At beſt, they have a tendency to give the reſentment of this bitter calamity a wrong direction, and to turn a public grievance into a mean perſonal, or a dangerous national, quarrel. Where there is a regular ſcheme of operations carried on, it is the ſyſtem, and not any individual perſon who acts in it, that is truly dangerous. This ſyſtem has not riſen ſolely from the ambition of Lord Bute, but from the circumſtances which favoured it, and from an indifference to the conſtitution which had been for ſome time growing among our gentry. We ſhould have been tried with it, if the Earl of Bute had never exiſted; and it will want neither a contriving head nor active members, when the Earl of Bute exiſts no longer. It is not, therefore, to rail at Lord Bute, but firmly to embody againſt this Court Party and its practices, which can afford us any proſpect of relief in our preſent condition.

Another motive induces me to put the perſonal conſideration of Lord Bute wholly out of the queſtion. He communicates very little in a direct manner with the greater part of our men

of buſineſs. This has never been his cuſtom. It is enough for him that he ſurrounds them with his creatures. Several imagine, therefore, that they have a very good excuſe for doing all the work of this Faction, when they have no perſonal connexion with Lord Bute. But whoever becomes a party to an Adminiſtration, compoſed of inſulated individuals, without faith plighted, tie, or common principle; an Adminiſtration conſtitutionally impotent, becauſe ſupported by no party in the nation; he who contributes to deſtroy the connexions of men and their truſt in one another, or in any ſort to throw the dependence of public counſels upon private will and favour, poſſibly may have nothing to do with the Earl of Bute. It matters little whether he be the friend or the enemy of that particular perſon. But let him be who or what he will, he abets a Faction that is driving hard to the ruin of his country. He is ſapping the foundation of its liberty, diſturbing the ſources of its domeſtic tranquillity, weakening its government over its dependencies, degrading it from all its importance in the ſyſtem of Europe.

It is this unnatural infuſion of a *ſyſtem of Favouritiſm* into a Government which in a great part of its conſtitution is popular, that has raiſed the preſent ferment in the nation. The people without entering deeply into its principles could plainly perceive its effects, in much violence, in a great ſpirit of innovation, and a general diſorder in all the functions of Government. I keep my eye ſolely on this

ſyſtem; if I ſpeak of thoſe meaſures which have ariſen from it, it will be ſo far only as they illuſtrate the general ſcheme. This is the fountain of all thoſe bitter waters of which, through an hundred different conduits, we have drunk until we are ready to burſt. The diſcretionary power of the Crown in the formation of Miniſtry, abuſed by bad or weak men, has given riſe to a ſyſtem, which, without directly violating the letter of any law, operates againſt the ſpirit of the whole conſtitution.

A plan of Favouritiſm for our executory Government is eſſentially at variance with the plan of our Legiſlature. One great end undoubtedly of a mixed Government like ours, compoſed of Monarchy, and of controls, on the part of the higher people and the lower, is that the Prince ſhall not be able to violate the laws. This is uſeful indeed and fundamental. But this, even at firſt view, is no more than a negative advantage; an armour merely defenſive. It is therefore next in order, and equal in importance, *that the diſcretionary powers which are neceſſarily veſted in the Monarch, whether for the execution of the laws, or for the nomination to magiſtracy and office, or for conducting the affairs of peace and war, or for ordering the revenue, ſhould all be exerciſed upon public principles and national grounds, and not on the likings or prejudices, the intrigues or policies, of a Court.* This, I ſaid, is equal in importance to the ſecuring a Government according to law. The laws reach but a very little

little way. Conſtitute Government how you pleaſe, infinitely the greater part of it muſt depend upon the exerciſe of the powers which are left at large to the prudence and uprightneſs of Miniſters of State. Even all the uſe and potency of the laws depends upon them. Without them, your Commonwealth is no better than a ſcheme upon paper; and not a living, acting, effective conſtitution. It is poſſible, that through negligence, or ignorance, or deſign artfully conducted, Miniſters may ſuffer one part of Government to languiſh, another to be perverted from its purpoſes, and every valuable intereſt of the country to fall into ruin and decay, without poſſibility of fixing any ſingle act on which a criminal proſecution can be juſtly grounded. The due arrangement of men in the active part of the State, far from being foreign to the purpoſes of a wiſe Government, ought to be among its very firſt and deareſt objects. When, therefore, the abettors of the new ſyſtem tell us, that between them and their oppoſers there is nothing but a ſtruggle for power, and that therefore we are noways concerned in it; we muſt tell thoſe who have the impudence to inſult us in this manner, that of all things we ought to be the moſt concerned, who and what ſort of men they are, that hold the truſt of every thing that is dear to us. Nothing can render this a point of indifference to the nation, but what muſt either render us totally deſperate, or ſoothe us into the ſecurity of ideots. We muſt ſoften

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into a credulity below the milkineſs of infancy, to think all men virtuous. We muſt be tainted with a malignity truly diabolical, to believe all the world to be equally wicked and corrupt. Men are in public life as in private, ſome good, ſome evil. The elevation of the one, and the depreſſion of the other, are the firſt objects of all true policy. But that form of Government, which, neither in its direct inſtitutions, nor in their immediate tendency, has contrived to throw its affairs into the moſt truſtworthy hands, but has left its whole executory ſyſtem to be diſpoſed of agreeably to the uncontrolled pleaſure of any one man, however excellent or virtuous, is a plan of polity defective not only in that member, but conſequentially erroneous in every part of it.

In arbitrary Governments, the conſtitution of the Miniſtry follows the conſtitution of the Legiſlature. Both the Law and the Magiſtrate are the creatures of Will. It muſt be ſo. Nothing, indeed, will appear more certain, on any tolerable conſideration of this matter, than that *every ſort of Government ought to have its Adminiſtration correſpondent to its Legiſlature.* If it ſhould be otherwiſe, things muſt fall into an hideous diſorder. The people of a free Commonwealth, who have taken ſuch care that their laws ſhould be the reſult of general conſent, cannot be ſo ſenſeleſs as to ſuffer their executory ſyſtem to be compoſed of perſons on whom they have no dependence, and whom no proofs of the public love and confidence have

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recommended to thoſe powers, upon the uſe of which the very being of the State depends.

The popular election of magiſtrates, and popular diſpoſition of rewards and honours, is one of the firſt advantages of a free State. Without it, or ſomething equivalent to it, perhaps the people cannot long enjoy the ſubſtance of freedom; certainly none of the vivifying energy of good Government. The frame of our Commonwealth did not admit of ſuch an actual election: but it provided as well, and (while the ſpirit of the conſtitution is preſerved) better for all the effects of it than by the method of ſuffrage in any democratic State whatſoever. It had always, until of late, been held the firſt duty of Parliament, *to refuſe to ſupport Government, until power was in the hands of perſons who were acceptable to the people, or while factions predominated in the Court in which the nation had no confidence.* Thus all the good effects of popular election were ſuppoſed to be ſecured to us, without the miſchiefs attending on perpetual intrigue, and a diſtinct canvaſs for every particular office throughout the body of the people. This was the moſt noble and refined part of our conſtitution. The people, by their repreſentatives and grandees, were intruſted with a deliberative power in making laws; the King with the control of his negative. The King was intruſted with the deliberative choice and the election to office; the people had the negative in a Parliamentary refuſal to ſupport. Formerly this power of controul was what kept Miniſters in

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awe of Parliaments, and Parliaments in reverence with the people. If the uſe of this power of controul on the ſyſtem and perſons of Adminiſtration is gone, every thing is loſt, Parliament and all. We may aſſure ourſelves, that if Parliament will tamely ſee evil men take poſſeſſion of all the ſtrong-holds of their country, and allow them time and means to fortify themſelves, under a pretence of giving them a fair trial, and upon a hope of diſcovering, whether they will not be reformed by power, and whether their meaſures will not be better than their morals, ſuch a Parliament will give countenance to their meaſures alſo, whatever that Parliament may pretend, and whatever thoſe meaſures may be.

Every good political inſtitution muſt have a preventive operation as well as a remedial. It ought to have a natural tendency to exclude bad men from Government, and not to truſt for the ſafety of the State to ſubſequent puniſhment alone: puniſhment, which has ever been tardy and uncertain; and which, when power is ſuffered in bad hands, may chance to fall rather on the injured than the criminal.

Before men are put forward into the great truſts of the State, they ought by their conduct to have obtained ſuch a degree of eſtimation in their country, as may be ſome ſort of pledge and ſecurity to the publick, that they will not abuſe thoſe truſts. It is no mean ſecurity for a proper uſe of power, that a man has ſhewn by the general tenor of his actions, that the affection,

the good opinion, the confidence, of his fellow citizens have been among the principal objects of his life; and that he has owed none of the gradations of his power or fortune to a ſettled contempt, or occaſional forfeiture of their eſteem.

That man who before he comes into power has no friends, or who coming into power is obliged to deſert his friends, or who loſing it has no friends to ſympathize with him; he who has no ſway among any part of the landed or commercial intereſt, but whoſe whole importance has begun with his office, and is ſure to end with it; is a perſon who ought never to be ſuffered by a controuling Parliament to continue in any of thoſe ſituations which confer the lead and direction of all our public affairs; becauſe ſuch a man *has no connexion with the intereſt of the people.*

Thoſe knots or cabals of men who have got together, avowedly without any public principle, in order to ſell their conjunct iniquity at the higher rate, and are therefore univerſally odious, ought never to be ſuffered to domineer in the State; becauſe they have *no connexion with the ſentiments and opinions of the people.*

Theſe are conſiderations which in my opinion enforce the neceſſity of having ſome better reaſon, in a free country, and a free Parliament, for ſupporting the Miniſters of the Crown, than that ſhort one, *That the King has thought proper to appoint them.* There is ſomething very courtly in this. But it is a principle pregnant with all

ſorts of miſchief, in a conſtitution like ours, to turn the views of active men from the country to the Court. Whatever be the road to power, that is the road which will be trod. If the opinion of the country be of no uſe as a means of power or conſideration, the qualities which uſually procure that opinion will be no longer cultivated. And whether it will be right, in a State ſo popular in its conſtitution as ours, to leave ambition without popular motives, and to truſt all to the operation of pure virtue in the minds of Kings and Miniſters, and public men, muſt be ſubmitted to the judgement and good ſenſe of the people of England.

Cunning men are here apt to break in, and, without directly controverting the principle, to raiſe objections from the difficulty under which the Sovereign labours, to diſtinguiſh the genuine voice and ſentiments of his people, from the clamour of a faction, by which it is ſo eaſily counterfeited. The nation, they ſay, is generally divided into parties, with views and paſſions utterly irreconcileable. If the King ſhould put his affairs into the hands of any one of them, he is ſure to diſguſt the reſt; if he ſelect particular men from among them all, it is an hazard that he diſguſts them all. Thoſe who are left out, however divided before, will ſoon run into a body of oppoſition; which, being a collection of many diſcontents into one focus, will without doubt be hot and violent enough. Faction will make its cries reſound through the nation, as if the whole were in an uproar,

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when by far the majority, and much the better part, will ſeem for a while as it were annihilated by the quiet in which their virtue and moderation incline them to enjoy the bleſſings of Government. Beſides that the opinion of the meer vulgar is a miſerable rule even with regard to themſelves, on account of their violence and inſtability. So that if you were to gratify them in their humour to-day, that very gratification would be a ground of their diſſatisfaction on the next. Now as all theſe rules of public opinion are to be collected with great difficulty, and to be applied with equal uncertainty as to the effect, what better can a King of England do, than to employ ſuch men as he finds to have views and inclinations moſt conformable to his own; who are leaſt infected with pride and ſelf-will, and who are leaſt moved by ſuch popular humours as are perpetually traverſing his deſigns, and diſturbing his ſervice; truſting that, when he means no ill to his people, he will be ſupported in his appointments, whether he chooſes to keep or to change, as his private judgement or his pleaſure leads him? He will find a ſure reſource in the real weight and influence of the Crown, when it is not ſuffered to become an inſtrument in the hands of a faction.

I will not pretend to ſay that there is nothing at all in this mode of reaſoning; becauſe I will not aſſert, that there is no difficulty in the art of Government. Undoubtedly the very beſt Adminiſtration muſt encounter a great deal of oppoſition; and the very worſt will find more

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ſupport than it deſerves. Sufficient appearances will never be wanting to thoſe who have a mind to deceive themſelves. It is a fallacy in conſtant uſe with thoſe who would level all things, and confound right with wrong, to inſiſt upon the inconveniencies which are attached to every choice, without taking into conſideration the different weight and conſequence of thoſe inconveniencies. The queſtion is not concerning *abſolute* diſcontent or *perfect* ſatisfaction in Government; neither of which can be pure and unmixed at any time, or upon any ſyſtem. The controverſy is about that degree of good humour in the people, which may poſſibly be attained, and ought certainly to be looked for. While ſome politicians may be waiting to know whether the ſenſe of every individual be againſt them, accurately diſtinguiſhing the vulgar from the better ſort, drawing lines between the enterprizes of a faction and the efforts of a people, they may chance to ſee the Government, which they are ſo nicely weighing, and dividing, and diſtinguiſhing, tumble to the ground in the midſt of their wiſe deliberation. Prudent men, when ſo great an object as the ſecurity of Government, or even its peace, is at ſtake, will not run the riſque of a deciſion which may be fatal to it. They who can read the political ſky will ſee an hurricane in a cloud no bigger than an hand at the very edge of the horizon, and will run into the firſt harbour. No lines can be laid down for civil or political wiſdom. They are a matter incapable of exact definition.

But, though no man can draw a ſtroke between the confines of day and night, yet light and darkneſs are upon the whole tolerably diſtinguiſhable. Nor will it be impoſſible for a Prince to find out ſuch a mode of Government, and ſuch perſons to adminiſter it, as will give a great degree of content to his people; without any curious and anxious reſearch for that abſtract, univerſal, perfect harmony, which while he is ſeeking, he abandons thoſe means of ordinary tranquillity which are in his power without any reſearch at all.

It is not more the duty than it is the intereſt of a Prince, to aim at giving tranquillity to his Government. But thoſe who adviſe him may have an intereſt in diſorder and confuſion. If the opinion of the people is againſt them, they will naturally wiſh that it ſhould have no prevalence. Here it is that the people muſt on their part ſhew themſelves ſenſible of their own value. Their whole importance, in the firſt inſtance, and afterwards their whole freedom, is at ſtake. Their freedom cannot long ſurvive their importance. Here it is that the natural ſtrength of the kingdom, the great peers, the leading landed gentlemen, the opulent merchants and manufacturers, the ſubſtantial yeomanry, muſt interpoſe, to reſcue their Prince, themſelves, and their poſterity.

We are at preſent at iſſue upon this point. We are in the great criſis of this contention; and the part which men take one way or other, will ſerve to diſcriminate their characters and their principles.

ciples. Until the matter is decided, the country will remain in its preſent confuſion. For while a ſyſtem of Adminiſtration is attempted, entirely repugnant to the genius of the people, and not conformable to the plan of their Government, every thing muſt neceſſarily be diſordered for a time, until this ſyſtem deſtroys the conſtitution, or the conſtitution gets the better of this ſyſtem.

There is, in my opinion, a peculiar venom and malignity in this political diſtemper beyond any that I have heard or read of. In former times the projectors of arbitrary Government attacked only the liberties of their country; a deſign ſurely miſchievous enough to have ſatisfied a mind of the moſt unruly ambition. But a ſyſtem unfavourable to freedom may be ſo formed, as conſiderably to exalt the grandeur of the State; and men may find in the pride and ſplendor of that proſperity ſome ſort of conſolation for the loſs of their ſolid privileges. Indeed the increaſe of the power of the State has often been urged by artful men, as a pretext for ſome abridgement of the public liberty. But the ſcheme of the junto under conſideration, not only ſtrikes a palſy into every nerve of our free conſtitution, but in the ſame degree benumbs and ſtupifies the whole executive power; rendering Government in all its grand operations languid, uncertain, ineffective; making Miniſters fearful of attempting, and incapable of executing, any uſeful plan of domeſtic arrangement, or of foreign politicks. It tends to produce neither

the ſecurity of a free Government, nor the energy of a Monarchy that is abſolute. Accordingly the Crown has dwindled away, in proportion to the unnatural and turgid growth of this excreſcence on the Court.

The interior Miniſtry are ſenſible, that war is a ſituation which ſets in its full light the value of the hearts of a people; and they well know, that the beginning of the importance of the people muſt be the end of theirs. For this reaſon they diſcover upon all occaſions the utmoſt fear of every thing, which by poſſibility may lead to ſuch an event. I do not mean that they manifeſt any of that pious fear which is backward to commit the ſafety of the country to the dubious experiment of war. Such a fear, being the tender ſenſation of virtue, excited, as it is regulated, by reaſon, frequently ſhews itſelf in a ſeaſonable boldneſs, which keeps danger at a diſtance, by ſeeming to deſpiſe it. Their fear betrays to the firſt glance of the eye, its true cauſe, and its real object. Foreign powers, confident in the knowledge of their character, have not ſcrupled to violate the moſt ſolemn treaties; and, in defiance of them, to make conqueſts in the midſt of a general peace, and in the heart of Europe. Such was the conqueſt of Corſica, by the profeſſed enemies of the freedom of mankind, in defiance of thoſe who were formerly its profeſſed defenders. We have had juſt claims upon the ſame powers; rights which ought to have been ſacred to them as well as to us, as they had their origin in our lenity and

generoſity towards France and Spain in the day of their great humiliation. Such I call the ranſom of Manilla, and the demand on France for the Eaſt India priſoners. But theſe powers put a juſt confidence in their reſource of the *double Cabinet*. Theſe demands (one of them at leaſt) are haſtening faſt towards an acquittal by preſcription. Oblivion begins to ſpread her cobwebs over all our ſpirited remonſtrances. Some of the moſt valuable branches of our trade are alſo on the point of periſhing from the ſame cauſe. I do not mean thoſe branches which bear without the hand of the vine-dreſſer; I mean thoſe which the policy of treaties had formerly ſecured to us; I mean to mark and diſtinguiſh the trade of Portugal, the loſs of which, and the power of the Cabal, have one and the ſame æra.

If, by any chance, the Miniſters who ſtand before the curtain poſſeſs or affect any ſpirit, it makes little or no impreſſion. Foreign Courts and Miniſters, who were among the firſt to diſcover and to profit by this invention of the *double Cabinet*, attend very little to their remonſtrances. They know that thoſe ſhadows of Miniſters have nothing to do in the ultimate diſpoſal of things. Jealouſies and animoſities are ſedulouſly nouriſhed in the outward Adminiſtration, and have been even conſidered as a *cauſa ſine qua non* in its conſtitution: thence foreign Courts have a certainty, that nothing can be done by common counſel in this nation. If one of thoſe Miniſters officially takes up a

buſineſs with ſpirit, it ſerves only the better to ſignalize the meanneſs of the reſt, and the diſcord of them all. His collegues in office are in haſte to ſhake him off, and to diſclaim the whole of his proceedings. Of this nature was that aſtoniſhing tranſaction, in which Lord Rochford, our Ambaſſador at Paris, remonſtrated againſt the attempt upon Corſica, in conſequence of a direct authority from Lord Shelburne. This remonſtrance the French Miniſter treated with the contempt that was natural; as he was aſſured, from the Ambaſſador of his Court to ours, that theſe orders of Lord Shelburne were not ſupported by the reſt of the (I had like to have ſaid Britiſh) Adminiſtration. Lord Rochford, a man of ſpirit, could not endure this ſituation. The conſequences were, however, curious. He returns from Paris, and comes home full of anger. Lord Shelburne, who gave the orders, is obliged to give up the ſeals. Lord Rochford, who obeyed theſe orders, receives them. He goes, however, into another department of the ſame office, that he might not be obliged officially to acquieſce in one ſituation under what he had officially remonſtrated againſt in another. At Paris, the Duke of Choiſeul conſidered this office arrangement as a compliment to him: here it was ſpoke of as an attention to the delicacy of Lord Rochford. But whether the compliment was to one or both, to this nation it was the ſame. By this tranſaction the condition of our Court lay expoſed in all its naked-

neſs,

neſs. Our office correſpondence has loſt all pretence to authenticity; Britiſh policy is brought into deriſion in thoſe nations, that a while ago trembled at the power of our arms, whilſt they looked up with confidence to the equity, firmneſs, and candour, which ſhone in all our negotiations. I repreſent this matter exactly in the light in which it has been univerſally received.

Such has been the aſpect of our foreign politicks, under the influence of a *double Cabinet*. With ſuch an arrangement at Court, it is impoſſible it ſhould have been otherwiſe. Nor is it poſſible that this ſcheme ſhould have a better effect upon the government of our dependencies, the firſt, the deareſt, and moſt delicate objects, of the interior policy of this empire. The Colonies know, that Adminiſtration is ſeparated from the Court, divided within itſelf, and deteſted by the nation. The *double Cabinet* has, in both the parts of it, ſhewn the moſt malignant diſpoſitions towards them, without being able to do them the ſmalleſt miſchief.

They are convinced, by ſufficient experience, that no plan, either of lenity or rigour, can be purſued with uniformity and perſeverance. Therefore they turn their eyes entirely from Great Britain, where they have neither dependence on friendſhip, nor apprehenſion from enmity. They look to themſelves, and their own arrangements. They grow every day into alienation from this country; and whilſt they are becoming diſconnected with our Government,

we have not the conſolation to find, that they are even friendly in their new independence. Nothing can equal the futility, the weakneſs, the raſhneſs, the timidity, the perpetual contradiction, in the management of our affairs in that part of the world. A volume might be written on this melancholy ſubject; but it were better to leave it entirely to the reflexions of the reader himſelf than not to treat it in the extent it deſerves.

In what manner our domeſtic œconomy is affected by this ſyſtem, it is needleſs to explain. It is the perpetual ſubject of their own complaints.

The Court Party reſolve the whole into faction. Having ſaid ſomething before upon this ſubject, I ſhall only obſerve here, that when they give this account of the prevalence of faction, they preſent no very favourable aſpect of the confidence of the people in their own Government. They may be aſſured, that however they amuſe themſelves with a variety of projects for ſubſtituting ſomething elſe in the place of that great and only foundation of Government, the confidence of the people, every attempt will but make their condition worſe. When men imagine that their food is only a cover for poiſon, and when they neither love nor truſt the hand that ſerves it, it is not the name of the roaſt beef of Old England, that will perſuade them to ſit down to the table that is ſpread for them. When the people conceive that laws, and tribunals, and even popular

aſſemblies,

aſſemblies, are perverted from the ends of their inſtitution, they find in thoſe names of degenerated eſtabliſhments only new motives to diſcontent. Thoſe bodies, which, when full of life and beauty, lay in their arms, and were their joy and comfort, when dead and putrid, become but the more loathſome from remembrance of former endearments. A ſullen gloom, and furious diſorder, prevail by fits; the nation loſes its reliſh for peace and proſperity, as it did in that ſeaſon of fullneſs which opened our troubles in the time of Charles the Firſt. A ſpecies of men to whom a ſtate of order would become a ſentence of obſcurity, are nouriſhed into a dangerous magnitude by the heat of inteſtine diſturbances; and it is no wonder that, by a ſort of ſiniſter piety, they cheriſh, in their turn, the diſorders which are the parents of all their conſequence. Superficial obſervers conſider ſuch perſons as the cauſe of the public uneaſineſs, when, in truth, they are nothing more than the effect of it. Good men look upon this diſtracted ſcene with ſorrow and indignation. Their hands are tied behind them. They are deſpoiled of all the power which might enable them to reconcile the ſtrength of Government with the rights of the people. They ſtand in a moſt diſtreſſing alternative. But in the election among evils they hope better things from temporary confuſion, than from eſtabliſhed ſervitude. In the mean time, the voice of law is not to be heard. Fierce licentiouſneſs begets violent reſtraints. The military arm is the ſole reliance;

reliance; and then, call your conſtitution what you pleaſe, it is the ſword that governs. The civil power, like every other that calls in the aid of an ally ſtronger than itſelf, periſhes by the aſſiſtance it receives. But the contrivers of this ſcheme of Government will not truſt ſolely to the military power; becauſe they are cunning men. Their reſtleſs and crooked ſpirit drives them to rake in the dirt of every kind of expedient. Unable to rule the multitude, they endeavour to raiſe diviſions amongſt them. One mob is hired to deſtroy another; a procedure which at once encourages the boldneſs of the populace, and juſtly increaſes their diſcontent. Men become penſioners of ſtate on account of their abilities in the array of riot, and the diſcipline of confuſion. Government is put under the diſgraceful neceſſity of protecting from the ſeverity of the laws that very licentiouſneſs, which the laws had been before violated to repreſs. Every thing partakes of the original diſorder. Anarchy predominates without freedom, and ſervitude without ſubmiſſion or ſubordination. Theſe are the conſequences inevitable to our public peace, from the ſcheme of rendering the executory Government at once odious and feeble; of freeing Adminiſtration from the conſtitutional and ſalutary controul of Parliament, and inventing for it a *new controul*, unknown to the conſtitution, an *interior Cabinet*; which brings the whole body of Government into confuſion and contempt.

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After having ſtated, as ſhortly as I am able, the effects of this ſyſtem on our foreign affairs, on the policy of our Government with regard to our dependencies, and on the interior œconomy of the Commonwealth; there remains only, in this part of my deſign, to ſay ſomething of the grand principle which firſt recommended this ſyſtem at Court. The pretence was, to prevent the King from being enſlaved by a faction, and made a priſoner in his cloſet. This ſcheme might have been expected to anſwer at leaſt its own end, and to indemnify the King, in his perſonal capacity, for all the confuſion into which it has thrown his Government. But has it in reality anſwered this purpoſe? I am ſure, if it had, every affectionate ſubject would have one motive for enduring with patience all the evils which attend it.

In order to come at the truth in this matter, it may not be amiſs to conſider it ſomewhat in detail. I ſpeak here of the King, and not of the Crown; the intereſts of which we have already touched. Independent of that greatneſs which a King poſſeſſes merely by being a repreſentative of the national dignity, the things in which he may have an individual intereſt ſeem to be theſe: wealth accumulated; wealth ſpent in magnificence, pleaſure, or beneficence; perſonal reſpect and attention; and above all, private eaſe and repoſe of mind. Theſe compoſe the inventory of proſperous circumſtances, whether they regard a Prince or a ſubject; their enjoyments

enjoyments differing only in the ſcale upon which they are formed.

Suppoſe then we were to aſk, whether the King has been richer than his predeceſſors in accumulated wealth, ſince the eſtabliſhment of the plan of Favouritiſm? I believe it will be found that the picture of royal indigence which our Court has preſented until this year, has been truly humiliating. Nor has it been relieved from this unſeemly diſtreſs, but by means which have hazarded the affection of the people, and ſhaken their confidence in Parliament. If the public treaſures had been exhauſted in magnificence and ſplendour, this diſtreſs would have been accounted for, and in ſome meaſure juſtified. Nothing would be more unworthy of this nation, than with a mean and mechanical rule, to mete out the ſplendour of the Crown. Indeed I have found very few perſons diſpoſed to ſo ungenerous a procedure. But the generality of people, it muſt be confeſſed, do feel a good deal mortified, when they compare the wants of the Court with its expences. They do not behold the cauſe of this diſtreſs in any part of the apparatus of Royal magnificence. In all this, they ſee nothing but the operations of parſimony, attended with all the conſequences of profuſion. Nothing expended, nothing ſaved. Their wonder is increaſed by their knowledge, that beſides the revenue ſettled on his Majeſty's Civil Liſt to the amount of 800,000*l.* a year, he has a farther aid, from a large penſion liſt, near 90,000*l.* a year, in Ireland; from the produce

duce of the Dutchy of Lancaſter (which we are told has been greatly improved); from the revenue of the Dutchy of Cornwall; from the American quit-rents; from the four and a half *per cent.* duty in the Leeward Iſlands; this laſt worth to be ſure conſiderably more than 40,000 *l.* a year. The whole is certainly not much ſhort of a million annually.

Theſe are revenues within the knowledge and cognizance of our national Councils. We have no direct right to examine into the receipts from his Majeſty's German Dominions, and the Biſhoprick of Oſnabrug. This is unqueſtionably true. But that which is not within the province of Parliament, is yet within the ſphere of every man's own reflexion. If a foreign Prince reſided amongſt us, the ſtate of his revenues could not fail of becoming the ſubject of our ſpeculation. Filled with an anxious concern for whatever regards the welfare of our Sovereign, it is impoſſible, in conſidering the miſerable circumſtances into which he has been brought, that this obvious topick ſhould be entirely paſſed over. There is an opinion univerſal, that theſe revenues produce ſomething not inconſiderable, clear of all charges and eſtabliſhments. This produce the people do not believe to be hoarded, nor perceive to be ſpent. It is accounted for in the only manner it can, by ſuppoſing that it is drawn away, for the ſupport of that Court Faction, which, whilſt it diſtreſſes the nation, impoveriſhes the Prince in every one of his reſources. I once more caution

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the reader, that I do not urge this conſideration concerning the foreign revenue, as if I ſuppoſed we had a direct right to examine into the expenditure of any part of it; but ſolely for the purpoſe of ſhewing how little this ſyſtem of Favouritiſm has been advantageous to the Monarch himſelf; which, without magnificence, has ſunk him intoa ſtate of unnatural poverty; at the ſame time that he poſſeſſed every means of affluence, from ample revenues, both in this country, and in other parts of his dominions.

Has this ſyſtem provided better for the treatment becoming his high and ſacred character, and ſecured the King from thoſe diſguſts attached to the neceſſity of employing men who are not perſonally agreeable? This is a topick upon which for many reaſons I could wiſh to be ſilent; but the pretence of ſecuring againſt ſuch cauſes of uneaſineſs, is the corner-ſtone of the Court Party. It has however ſo happened, that if I were to fix upon any one point, in which this ſyſtem has been more particularly and ſhamefully blameable, the effects which it has produced would juſtify me in chooſing for that point its tendency to degrade the perſonal dignity of the Sovereign, and to expoſe him to a thouſand contradictions and mortifications. It is but too evident in what manner theſe projectors of Royal greatneſs have fulfilled all their magnificent promiſes. Without recapitulating all the circumſtances of the reign, every one of which is more or leſs a melancholy proof of the

truth

truth of what I have advanced, let us conſider the language of the Court but a few years ago, concerning moſt of the perſons now in the external Adminiſtration: let me aſk, whether any enemy to the perſonal feelings of the Sovereign, could poſſibly contrive a keener inſtrument of perſonal mortification, and degradation of all dignity, than almoſt every part and member of the preſent arrangement? nor, in the whole courſe of our hiſtory, has any compliance with the will of the people ever been known to extort from any Prince a greater contradiction to all his own declared affections and diſlikes than that which is now adopted, in direct oppoſition to every thing the people approve and deſire.

An opinion prevails, that greatneſs has been more than once adviſed to ſubmit to certain condeſcenſions towards individuals, which have been denied to the entreaties of a nation. For the meaneſt and moſt dependent inſtrument of this ſyſtem knows, that there are hours when its exiſtence may depend upon his adherence to it; and he takes his advantage accordingly. Indeed it is a law of nature, that whoever is neceſſary to what we have made our object, is ſure in ſome way, or in ſome time or other, to become our maſter. All this however is ſubmitted to, in order to avoid that monſtrous evil of governing in concurrence with the opinion of the people. For it ſeems to be laid down as a maxim, that a King has ſome ſort of intereſt in giving uneaſineſs to his ſubjects: that all who are pleaſing to them, are to be of courſe

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diſagreeable to him: that as ſoon as the perſons who are odious at Court are known to be odious to the people, it is ſnatched at as a lucky occaſion of ſhowering down upon them all kinds of emoluments and honours. None are conſidered as well-wiſhers to the Crown, but thoſe who adviſe to ſome unpopular courſe of action; none capable of ſerving it, but thoſe who are obliged to call at every inſtant upon all its power for the ſafety of their lives. None are ſuppoſed to be fit prieſts in the temple of Government, but the perſons who are compelled to fly into it for ſanctuary. Such is the effect of this refined project; ſuch is ever the reſult of all the contrivances which are uſed to free men from the ſervitude of their reaſon, and from the neceſſity of ordering their affairs according to their evident intereſts. Theſe contrivances oblige them to run into a real and ruinous ſervitude, in order to avoid a ſuppoſed reſtraint that might be attended with advantage.

If therefore this ſyſtem has ſo ill anſwered its own grand pretence of ſaving the King from the neceſſity of employing perſons diſagreeable to him, has it given more peace and tranquillity to his Majeſty's private hours? No, moſt certainly. The father of his people cannot poſſibly enjoy repoſe, while his family is in ſuch a ſtate of diſtraction. Then what has the Crown or the King profited by all this fine-wrought ſcheme? Is he more rich, or more ſplendid, or more powerful, or more at his eaſe, by ſo many labours and contrivances? Have they not beg-

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gared his Exchequer, tarniſhed the ſplendor of his Court, ſunk his dignity, galled his feelings, diſcompoſed the whole order and happineſs of his private life?

It will be very hard, I believe, to ſtate in what reſpect the King has profited by that faction which preſumptuouſly chooſe to call themſelves, *his friends*.

If particular men had grown into an attachment, by the diſtinguiſhed honour of the ſociety of their Sovereign; and, by being the partakers of his amuſements, came ſometimes to prefer the gratification of his perſonal inclinations to the ſupport of his high character, the thing would be very natural, and it would be excuſable enough. But the pleaſant part of the ſtory is, that theſe *King's friends* have no more ground for uſurping ſuch a title, than a reſident freeholder in Cumberland or in Cornwall. They are only known to their Sovereign by kiſſing his hand, for the offices, penſions, and grants, into which they have deceived his benignity. May no ſtorm ever come, which will put the firmneſs of their attachment to the proof; and which, in the midſt of confuſions, and terrors, and ſufferings, may demonſtrate the eternal difference between a true and ſevere friend to the Monarchy, and a ſlippery ſycophant of the Court! *Quantum infido ſcurræ diſtabit amicus.*

So far I have conſidered the effect of the Court ſyſtem, chiefly as it operates upon the executive Government, on the temper of the people, and on the happineſs of the Sovereign. It remains,

that we ſhould conſider, with a little attention, its operation upon Parliament.

Parliament was indeed the great object of all theſe politicks, the end at which they aimed, as well as the inſtrument by which they were to operate. But, before Parliament could be made ſubſervient to a ſyſtem, by which it was to be degraded from the dignity of a national council, into a mere member of the Court, it muſt be greatly changed from its original character.

In ſpeaking of this body, I have my eye chiefly on the Houſe of Commons. I hope I ſhall be indulged in a few obſervations on the nature and character of that aſſembly; not with regard to its *legal form and power*, but to its *ſpirit*, and to the purpoſes it is meant to anſwer in the conſtitution.

The Houſe of Commons was ſuppoſed originally to be *no part of the ſtanding Government of this country*. It was conſidered as a *controul*, iſſuing *immediately* from the people, and ſpeedily to be reſolved into the maſs from whence it aroſe. In this reſpect it was in the higher part of Government what juries are in the lower. The capacity of a magiſtrate being tranſitory, and that of a citizen permanent, the latter capacity it was hoped would of courſe preponderate in all diſcuſſions, not only between the people and the ſtanding authority of the Crown, but between the people and the fleeting authority of the Houſe of Commons itſelf. It was hoped that, being of a middle nature between ſubject and Government, they would feel with a more tender and a nearer

intereſt every thing that concerned the people, than the other remoter and more permanent parts of Legiſlature.

Whatever alterations time and the neceſſary accommodation of buſineſs may have introduced, this character can never be ſuſtained, unleſs the Houſe of Commons ſhall be made to bear ſome ſtamp of the actual diſpoſition of the people at large. It would (among public misfortunes) be an evil more natural and tolerable, that the Houſe of Commons ſhould be infected with every epidemical phrenſy of the people, as this would indicate ſome conſanguinity, ſome ſympathy of nature with their conſtituents, than that they ſhould in all caſes be wholly untouched by the opinions and feelings of the people out of doors. By this want of ſympathy they would ceaſe to be an Houſe of Commons. For it is not the derivation of the power of that Houſe from the people, which makes it in a diſtinct ſenſe their repreſentative. The King is the repreſentative of the people; ſo are the Lords; ſo are the Judges. They all are truſtees for the people, as well as the Commons; becauſe no power is given for the ſole ſake of the holder; and although Government certainly is an inſtitution of Divine authority, yet its forms, and the perſons who adminiſter it, all originate from the people.

A popular origin cannot therefore be the characteriſtical diſtinction of a popular repreſentative. This belongs equally to all parts of Government, and in all forms. The virtue, ſpirit, and eſſence of a Houſe of Commons conſiſts in its being the

expreſs image of the feelings of the nation. It was not inſtituted to be a controul *upon* the people, as of late it has been taught, by a doctrine of the moſt pernicious tendency. It was deſigned as a controul *for* the people. Other inſtitutions have been formed for the purpoſe of checking popular exceſſes; and they are, I apprehend, fully adequate to their object. If not, they ought to be made ſo. The Houſe of Commons, as it was never intended for the ſupport of peace and ſubordination, is miſerably appointed for that ſervice; having no ſtronger weapon than its Mace, and no better officer than its Serjeant at Arms, which it can command of its own proper authority. A vigilant and jealous eye over executory and judicial magiſtracy; an anxious care of public money, an openneſs, approaching towards facility, to public complaint: theſe ſeem to be the true characteriſtics of an Houſe of Commons. But an addreſſing Houſe of Commons, and a petitioning nation; an Houſe of Commons full of confidence, when the nation is plunged in deſpair; in the utmoſt harmony with Miniſters, whom the people regard with the utmoſt abhorrence; who vote thanks, when the public opinion calls upon them for impeachments; who are eager to grant, when the general voice demands account; who, in all diſputes between the people and Adminiſtration, preſume againſt the people; who puniſh their diſorders, but refuſe even to enquire into the provocations to them; this is an unnatural, a monſtrous ſtate of things in this conſtitution. Such an Aſſembly may be a

great, wiſe, awful Senate; but it is not to any popular purpoſe an Houſe of Commons. This change from an immediate ſtate of procuration and delegation to a courſe of acting as from original power, is the way in which all the popular magiſtracies in the world have been perverted from their purpoſes. It is indeed their greateſt and ſometimes their incurable corruption. For there is a material diſtinction between that corruption by which particular points are carried againſt reaſon, (this is a thing which cannot be prevented by human wiſdom, and is of leſs conſequence) and the corruption of the principle itſelf. For then the evil is not accidental, but ſettled. The diſtemper becomes the natural habit.

For my part, I ſhall be compelled to conclude the principle of Parliament to be totally corrupted, and therefore its ends entirely defeated, when I ſee two ſymptoms: firſt, a rule of indiſcriminate ſupport to all Miniſters; becauſe this deſtroys their very end as a controul, and is a general previous ſanction to miſgovernment: and ſecondly, the ſetting up any claims adverſe to the right of free election; for this tends to ſubvert the legal authority by which they ſit.

I know that, ſince the Revolution, along with many dangerous, many uſeful powers of Government have been weakened. It is abſolutely neceſſary to have frequent recourſe to the Legiſlature. Parliaments muſt therefore ſit every year, and for great part of the year. The dreadful diſorders of frequent elections have alſo

neceſſitated a ſeptennial inſtead of a triennial duration. Theſe circumſtances, I mean the conſtant habit of authority, and the unfrequency of elections, have tended very much to draw the Houſe of Commons towards the character of a ſtanding Senate. It is a diſorder which has ariſen from the cure of greater diſorders; it has ariſen from the extreme difficulty of reconciling liberty under a monarchical Government, with external ſtrength and with internal tranquillity.

It is very clear that we cannot free ourſelves entirely from this great inconvenience; but I would not increaſe an evil, becauſe I was not able to remove it; and becauſe it was not in my power to keep the Houſe of Commons religiouſly true to its firſt principles, I would not argue for carrying it to a total oblivion of them. This has been the great ſcheme of power in our time. They who will not conform their conduct to the public good, and cannot ſupport it by the prerogative of the Crown, have adopted a new plan. They have totally abandoned the ſhattered and old-faſhioned fortreſs of prerogative, and made a lodgement in the ſtrong hold of Parliament itſelf. If they have any evil deſign to which there is no ordinary legal power commenſurate, they bring it into Parliament. In Parliament the whole is executed from the beginning to the end. In Parliament the power of obtaining their object is abſolute; and the ſafety in the proceeding perfect; no rules to confine, no after reckonings to terrify. Parliament

cannot

cannot with any great propriety puniſh others, for things in which they themſelves have been accomplices. Thus the controul of Parliament upon the executory power is loſt; becauſe Parliament is made to partake in every conſiderable act of Government. *Impeachment, that great guardian of the purity of the Conſtitution, is in danger of being loſt, even to the idea of it.*

By this plan ſeveral important ends are anſwered to the Cabal. If the authority of Parliament ſupports itſelf, the credit of every act of Government which they contrive, is ſaved; but if the act be ſo very odious that the whole ſtrength of Parliament is inſufficient to recommend it, then Parliament is itſelf diſcredited; and this diſcredit increaſes more and more that indifference to the conſtitution, which it is the conſtant aim of its enemies, by their abuſe of Parliamentary powers, to render general among the people. Whenever Parliament is perſuaded to aſſume the offices of executive Government, it will loſe all the confidence, love, and veneration, which it has ever enjoyed whilſt it was ſuppoſed the *corrective and controul* of the acting powers of the State. This would be the event, though its conduct in ſuch a perverſion of its functions ſhould be tolerably juſt and moderate; but if it ſhould be iniquitous, violent, full of paſſion, and full of faction, it would be conſidered as the moſt intolerable of all the modes of tyranny.

For a conſiderable time this ſeparation of the repreſentatives from their conſtituents went on with a ſilent progreſs; and had thoſe, who con-

ducted the plan for their total ſeparation, been perſons of temper and abilities any way equal to the magnitude of their deſign, the ſucceſs would have been infallible: but by their precipitancy they have laid it open in all its nakedneſs; the nation is alarmed at it; and the event may not be pleaſant to the contrivers of the ſcheme. In the laſt ſeſſion, the corps called the *King's friends* made an hardy attempt all at once, *to alter the right of election itſelf*; to put it into the power of the Houſe of Commons to diſable any perſon diſagreeable to them from ſitting in Parliament, without any other rule than their own pleaſure; to make incapacities, either general for deſcriptions of men, or particular for individuals; and to take into their body, perſons who avowedly had never been choſen by the majority of legal electors, nor agreeably to any known rule of law.

The arguments upon which this claim was founded and combated, are not my buſineſs here. Never has a ſubject been more amply and more learnedly handled; nor upon one ſide in my opinion more ſatisfactorily; they who are not convinced by what is already written would not receive conviction *though one aroſe from the dead.*

I too have thought on this ſubject: but my purpoſe here, is only to conſider it as a part of the favourite project of Government; to obſerve on the motives which led to it; and to trace its political conſequences.

A violent rage for the puniſhment of Mr. Wilkes was the pretence of the whole. This gentleman, by ſetting himſelf ſtrongly in oppo-

ſition

ſition to the Court Cabal, had become at once an object of their perſecution, and of the popular favour. The hatred of the Court Party purſuing, and the countenance of the people protecting him, it very ſoon became not at all a queſtion on the man, but a trial of ſtrength between the two parties. The advantage of the victory in this particular conteſt was the preſent, but not the only, nor by any means the principal, object. Its operation upon the character of the Houſe of Commons was the great point in view. The point to be gained by the Cabal was this; that a precedent ſhould be eſtabliſhed, tending to ſhew, *That the favour of the People was not ſo ſure a road as the favour of the Court even to popular honours and popular truſts.* A ſtrenuous reſiſtance to every appearance of lawleſs power; a ſpirit of independence carried to ſome degree of enthuſiaſm; an inquiſitive character to diſcover, and a bold one to diſplay, every corruption and every error of Government; theſe are the qualities which recommend a man to a ſeat in the Houſe of Commons, in open and merely popular elections. An indolent and ſubmiſſive diſpoſition; a diſpoſition to think charitably of all the actions of men in power, and to live in a mutual intercourſe of favours with them; an inclination rather to countenance a ſtrong uſe of authority, than to bear any ſort of licentiouſneſs on the part of the people; theſe are unfavourable qualities in an open election for Members of Parliament.

The inſtinct which carries the people towards the choice of the former, is juſtified by reaſon; becauſe

becauſe a man of ſuch a character, even in its exorbitancies, does not directly contradict the purpoſes of a truſt, the end of which is a controul on power. The latter character, even when it is not in its extreme, will execute this truſt but very imperfectly; and if, deviating to the leaſt exceſs, will certainly fruſtrate inſtead of forwarding the purpoſes of a controul on Government. But when the Houſe of Commons was to be new modelled, this principle was not only to be changed, but reverſed. Whilſt any errours committed in ſupport of power, were left to the law, with every advantage of favourable conſtruction, of mitigation, and finally of pardon; all exceſſes on the ſide of liberty, or in purſuit of popular favour, or in defence of popular rights and privileges, were not only to be puniſhed by the rigour of the known law, but by a *diſcretionary* proceeding which brought on *the loſs of the popular object itſelf*. Popularity was to be rendered, if not directly penal, at leaſt highly dangerous. The favour of the people might lead even to a diſqualification of repreſenting them. Their odium might become, ſtrained through the medium of two or three conſtructions, the means of ſitting as the truſtee of all that was dear to them. This is puniſhing the offence in the offending part. Until this time, the opinion of the people, through the power of an Aſſembly, ſtill in ſome ſort popular, led to the greateſt honours and emoluments in the gift of the Crown. Now the principle is reverſed; and the favour of the Court is the only ſure way of obtaining and holding

holding thoſe honours which ought to be in the diſpoſal of the people.

It ſignifies very little how this matter may be quibbled away. Example, the only argument of effect in civil life, demonſtrates the truth of my propoſition. Nothing can alter my opinion concerning the pernicious tendency of this example, until I ſee ſome man for his indiſcretion in the ſupport of power, for his violent and intemperate ſervility, rendered incapable of ſitting in Parliament. For as it now ſtands, the fault of overſtraining popular qualities, and, irregularly if you pleaſe, aſſerting popular privileges, has led to diſqualification; the oppoſite fault never has produced the ſlighteſt puniſhment. Reſiſtance to power, has ſhut the door of the Houſe of Commons to one man; obſequiouſneſs and ſervility, to none.

Not that I would encourage popular diſorder, or any diſorder. But I would leave ſuch offences to the law, to be puniſhed in meaſure and proportion. The laws of this country are for the moſt part conſtituted, and wiſely ſo, for the general ends of Government, rather than for the preſervation of our particular liberties. Whatever therefore is done in ſupport of liberty, by perſons not in public truſt, or not acting merely in that truſt, is liable to be more or leſs out of the ordinary courſe of the law; and the law itſelf is ſufficient to animadvert upon it with great ſeverity. Nothing indeed can hinder that ſevere letter from cruſhing us, except the temperaments it may receive from a trial by jury. But

if

if the habit prevails of *going beyond the law*, and ſuperſeding this judicature, of carrying offences, real or ſuppoſed, into the legiſlative bodies, who ſhall eſtabliſh themſelves into *courts of criminal equity* (ſo the *Star Chamber* has been called by Lord Bacon), all the evils of the *Star Chamber* are revived. A large and liberal conſtruction in aſcertaining offences, and a diſcretionary power in puniſhing them, is the idea of *criminal equity*; which is in truth a monſter in Juriſprudence. It ſignifies nothing whether a court for this purpoſe be a Committee of Council, or an Houſe of Commons, or an Houſe of Lords; the liberty of the ſubject will be equally ſubverted by it. The true end and purpoſe of that Houſe of Parliament which entertains ſuch a juriſdiction will be deſtroyed by it.

I will not believe, what no other man living believes, that Mr. Wilkes was puniſhed for the indecency of his publications, or the impiety of his ranſacked cloſet. If he had fallen in a common ſlaughter of libellers and blaſphemers, I could well believe that nothing more was meant than was pretended. But when I ſee that, for years together, full as impious, and perhaps more dangerous writings to religion and virtue and order, have not been puniſhed, nor their authors diſcountenanced; that the moſt audacious libels on Royal Majeſty have paſſed without notice; that the moſt treaſonable invectives againſt the laws, liberties, and conſtitution of the country, have not met with the ſlighteſt animadverſion; I muſt conſider this as a ſhocking and ſhameleſs pretence.

Never

Never did an envenomed ſcurrility againſt every thing ſacred and civil, public and private, rage through the kingdom with ſuch a furious and unbridled licence. All this while the peace of the nation muſt be ſhaken, to ruin one libeller, and to tear from the populace a ſingle favourite.

Nor is it that vice merely ſkulks in an obſcure and contemptible impunity. Does not the publick behold with indignation, perſons not only generally ſcandalous in their lives, but the identical perſons who, by their ſociety, their inſtruction, their example, their encouragement, have drawn this man into the very faults which have furniſhed the Cabal with a pretence for his perſecution, loaded with every kind of favour, honour and diſtinction which a Court can beſtow? Add but the crime of ſervility (the *fœdum crimen ſervitutis*) to every other crime, and the whole maſs is immediately tranſmuted into virtue, and becomes the juſt ſubject of reward and honour. When therefore I reflect upon this method purſued by the Cabal in diſtributing rewards and puniſhments, I muſt conclude that Mr. Wilkes is the object of perſecution, not on account of what he has done in common with others who are the objects of reward, but for that in which he differs from many of them: that he is purſued for the ſpirited diſpoſitions which are blended with his vices; for his unconquerable firmneſs, for his reſolute, indefatigable, ſtrenuous reſiſtance againſt oppreſſion.

In this caſe, therefore, it was not the man that was to be puniſhed, nor his faults that were to be

diſcoun-

diſcountenanced. Oppoſition to acts of power was to be marked by a kind of civil proſcription. The popularity which ſhould ariſe from ſuch an oppoſition was to be ſhewn unable to protect it. The qualities by which court is made to the people, were to render every fault inexpiable, and every error irretrievable. The qualities by which court is made to power, were to cover and to ſanctify every thing. He that will have a ſure and honourable ſeat in the Houſe of Commons, muſt take care how he adventures to cultivate popular qualities; otherwiſe he may remember the old maxim, *Breves et infauſtos populi Romani amores.* If, therefore, a purſuit of popularity expoſe a man to greater dangers than a diſpoſition to ſervility, the principle which is the life and ſoul of popular elections will periſh out of the conſtitution.

It behoves the people of England to conſider how the Houſe of Commons under the operation of theſe examples muſt of neceſſity be conſtituted. On the ſide of the Court will be, all honours, offices, emoluments; every ſort of perſonal gratification to avarice or vanity; and, what is of more moment to moſt gentlemen, the means of growing, by innumerable petty ſervices to individuals, into a ſpreading intereſt in their country. On the other hand, let us ſuppoſe a perſon unconnected with the Court, and in oppoſition to its ſyſtem. For his own perſon, no office, or emolument, or title; no promotion, eccleſiaſtical, or civil, or military, or naval, for children, or brothers,

brothers, or kindred. In vain an expiring intereſt in a borough calls for offices, or ſmall livings, for the children of mayors, and aldermen, and capital burgeſſes. His Court rival has them all. He can do an infinite number of acts of generoſity and kindneſs, and even of public ſpirit. He can procure indemnity from quarters. He can procure advantages in trade. He can get pardons for offences. He can obtain a thouſand favours, and avert a thouſand evils. He may, while he betrays every valuable intereſt of the kingdom, be a benefactor, a patron, a father, a guardian angel, to his borough. The unfortunate independent member has nothing to offer but harſh refuſal, or pitiful excuſe, or deſpondent repreſentation of an hopeleſs intereſt. Except from his private fortune, in which he may be equalled, perhaps exceeded, by his Court competitor, he has no way of ſhewing any one good quality, or of making a ſingle friend. In the Houſe, he votes for ever in a diſpirited minority. If he ſpeaks, the doors are locked. A body of loquacious place-men go out to tell the world, that all he aims at, is to get into office. If he has not the talent of elocution, which is the caſe of many as wiſe and knowing men as any in the Houſe, he is liable to all theſe inconveniencies, without the eclat which attends upon any tolerably ſucceſsful exertion of eloquence. Can we conceive a more diſcouraging poſt of duty than this? Strip it of the poor reward of popularity; ſuffer even the exceſſes committed in defence

defence of the popular intereſt, to become a ground for the majority of that Houſe to form a diſqualification out of the line of the law, and at their pleaſure, attended not only with the loſs of the franchiſe, but with every kind of perſonal diſgrace.—If this ſhall happen, the people of this kingdom may be aſſured that they cannot be firmly or faithfully ſerved by any man. It is out of the nature of men and things that they ſhould; and their preſumption will be equal to their folly, if they expect it. The power of the people, within the laws, muſt ſhew itſelf ſufficient to protect every repreſentative in the animated performance of his duty; or that duty cannot be performed. The Houſe of Commons can never be a controul on other parts of Government unleſs they are controuled themſelves by their conſtituents; and unleſs theſe conſtituents poſſeſs ſome right in the choice of that Houſe, which it is not in the power of that Houſe to take away. If they ſuffer this power of arbitrary incapacitation to ſtand, they have utterly perverted every other power of the Houſe of Commons. The late proceeding, I will not ſay, *is* contrary to law; it *muſt* be ſo; for the power which is claimed cannot, by any poſſibility, be a legal power in any limited member of Government.

The power which they claim, of declaring incapacities, would not be above the juſt claims of a final judicature, if they had not laid it down as a leading principle, that they had no rule in the exerciſe of this claim, but their own *diſcretion*.

Not

Not one of their abettors has ever undertaken to aſſign the principle of unfitneſs, the ſpecies or degree of delinquency, on which the Houſe of Commons will expel, nor the mode of proceeding upon it, nor the evidence upon which it is eſtabliſhed. The direct conſequence of which is, that the firſt franchiſe of an Engliſhman, and that on which all the reſt vitally depend, is to be forfeited for ſome offence which no man knows, and which is to be proved by no known rule whatſoever of legal evidence. This is ſo anomalous to our whole conſtitution, that I will venture to ſay, the moſt trivial right which the ſubject claims, never was, nor can be, forfeited in ſuch a manner.

The whole of their uſurpation is eſtabliſhed upon this method of arguing. We do not *make* laws. No; we do not contend for this power. We only *declare* law; and, as we are a tribunal both competent and ſupreme, what we declare to be law becomes law, although it ſhould not have been ſo before. Thus the circumſtance of having no *appeal* from their juriſdiction is made to imply that they have no *rule* in the exerciſe of it; the judgement does not derive its validity from its conformity to the law; but prepoſterouſly the law is made to attend on the judgement; and the rule of the judgement is no other than the *occaſional will of the Houſe*. An arbitrary diſcretion leads, legality follows; which is juſt the very nature and deſcription of a legiſlative act.

This claim in their hands was no barren theory. It was purſued into its utmoſt conſequences; and

a dangerous principle has begot a correſpondent practice. A ſyſtematic ſpirit has been ſhewn upon both ſides. The electors of Middleſex choſe a perſon whom the Houſe of Commons had voted incapable; and the Houſe of Commons has taken in a member whom the electors of Middleſex had not choſen. By a conſtruction on that legiſlative power which had been aſſumed, they declared that the true legal ſenſe of the county was contained in the minority, on that occaſion; and might, on a reſiſtance to a vote of incapacity, be contained in any minority.

When any conſtruction of law goes againſt the ſpirit of the privilege it was meant to ſupport, it is a vicious conſtruction. It is material to us to be repreſented really and *bona fide*, and not in forms, in types, and ſhadows, and fictions of law. The right of election was not eſtabliſhed merely as a *matter of form*, to ſatisfy ſome method and rule of technical reaſoning; it was not a principle which might ſubſtitute a *Titius* or a *Maevius*, a *John Doe* or *Richard Roe*, in the place of a man ſpecially choſen; not a principle which was juſt as well ſatisfied with one man as with another. It is a right, the effect of which is to give to the people, that man, and *that man only*, whom by their voices, actually, not conſtructively given, they declare that they know, eſteem, love, and truſt. This right is a matter within their own power of judging and feeling; not an *ens rationis* and creature of law: nor can thoſe devices, by which any thing elſe is ſubſtituted in the place of ſuch an actual choice,

anſwer in the leaſt degree the end of repreſentation.

I know that the courts of law have made as ſtrained conſtructions in other caſes. Such is the conſtruction in common recoveries. The method of conſtruction which in that caſe gives to the perſons in remainder, for their ſecurity and repreſentative, the door-keeper, cryer, or ſweeper of the Court, or ſome other ſhadowy being without ſubſtance or effect, is a fiction of a very coarſe texture. This was however ſuffered, by the acquieſcence of the whole kingdom, for ages; becauſe the evaſion of the old ſtatute of Weſtminſter, which authoriſed perpetuities, had more ſenſe and utility than the law which was evaded. But an attempt to turn the right of election into ſuch a farce and mockery as a fictitious fine and recovery, will, I hope, have another fate; becauſe the laws which give it are infinitely dear to us, and the evaſion is infinitely contemptible.

The people indeed have been told, that this power of diſcretionary diſqualification is veſted in hands that they may truſt, and who will be ſure not to abuſe it to their prejudice. Until I find ſomething in this argument differing from that on which every mode of deſpotiſm has been defended, I ſhall not be inclined to pay it any great compliment. The people are ſatisfied to truſt themſelves with the exerciſe of their own privileges, and do not deſire this kind intervention of the Houſe of Commons to free them from the burthen. They are certainly in the right. They ought not to truſt the Houſe of Commons with a

power over their franchiſes: becauſe the conſtitution, which placed two other coordinate powers to controul it, repoſed no ſuch confidence in that body. It were a folly well deſerving ſervitude for its puniſhment, to be full of confidence where the laws are full of diſtruſt; and to give to an Houſe of Commons, arrogating to its ſole reſolution the moſt harſh and odious part of legiſlative authority, that degree of ſubmiſſion which is due only to the Legiſlature itſelf.

When the Houſe of Commons, in an endeavour to obtain new advantages at the expence of the other orders of the State, for the benefit of the *Commons at large*, have purſued ſtrong meaſures; if it were not juſt, it was at leaſt natural, that the conſtituents ſhould connive at all their proceedings; becauſe we were ourſelves ultimately to profit. But when this ſubmiſſion is urged to us, in a conteſt between the repreſentatives and ourſelves, and where nothing can be put into their ſcale which is not taken from ours, they fancy us to be children when they tell us they are our repreſentatives, our own fleſh and blood, and that all the ſtripes they give us are for our good. The very deſire of that body to have ſuch a truſt contrary to law repoſed in them, ſhews that they are not worthy of it. They certainly will abuſe it; becauſe all men poſſeſſed of an uncontrouled diſcretionary power leading to the aggrandiſement and profit of their own body have always abuſed it: and I ſee no particular ſanctity in our times, that is at all likely, by a

miraculous operation, to overrule the courſe of nature.

But we muſt purpoſely ſhut our eyes, if we conſider this matter merely as a conteſt between the Houſe of Commons and the Electors. The true conteſt is between the Electors of the kingdom and the Crown; the Crown acting by an inſtrumental Houſe of Commons. It is preciſely the ſame, whether the Miniſters of the Crown can diſqualify by a dependent Houſe of Commons, or by a dependent court of *Star Chamber*, or by a dependent court of King's Bench. If once Members of Parliament can be practically convinced, that they do not depend on the affection or opinion of the people for their political being; they will give themſelves over, without even an appearance of reſerve, to the influence of the Court.

Indeed, a Parliament unconnected with the people, is eſſential to a Miniſtry unconnected with the people; and therefore thoſe who ſaw through what mighty difficulties the interior Miniſtry waded, and the exterior were dragged, in this buſineſs, will conceive of what prodigious importance, the new corps of *King's men* held this principle of occaſional and perſonal incapacitation, to the whole body of their deſign.

When the Houſe of Commons was thus made to conſider itſelf as the maſter of its conſtituents, there wanted but one thing to ſecure that Houſe againſt all poſſible future deviation towards popularity; an *unlimited* fund of money to be laid out according to the pleaſure of the Court.

To compleat the ſcheme of bringing our Court to a reſemblance to the neighbouring Monarchies, it was neceſſary, in effect, to deſtroy thoſe appropriations of revenue, which ſeem to limit the property, as the other laws had done the powers, of the Crown. An opportunity for this purpoſe was taken, upon an application to Parliament for payment of the debts of the Civil Liſt; which in 1769 had amounted to 513,000 *l.* Such application had been made upon former occaſions; but to do it in the former manner would by no means anſwer the preſent purpoſe.

Whenever the Crown had come to the Commons to deſire a ſupply for the diſcharging of debts due on the Civil Liſt; it was always aſked and granted with one of the three following qualifications; ſometimes with all of them. Either it was ſtated, that the revenue had been diverted from its purpoſes by Parliament: or that thoſe duties had fallen ſhort of the ſum for which they were given by Parliament, and that the intention of the Legiſlature had not been fulfilled: or that the money required to diſcharge the Civil Liſt Debt, was to be raiſed chargeable on the Civil Liſt duties. In the reign of Queen Anne, the Crown was found in debt. The leſſening and granting away ſome part of her revenue by Parliament was alledged as the cauſe of that debt, and pleaded as an equitable ground, ſuch it certainly was, for diſcharging it. It does not appear that the duties which were then applied to the ordinary Government produced clear above 580,000 *l.* a year; becauſe, when they were afterwards granted to

George

George the Firſt, 120,000 *l.* was added, to complete the whole to 700,000 *l.* a year. Indeed it was then aſſerted, and, I have no doubt, truely, that for many years the net produce did not amount to above 550,000 *l.* The Queen's extraordinary charges were beſides very conſiderable; equal, at leaſt, to any we have known in our time. The application to Parliament was not for an abſolute grant of money; but to empower the Queen to raiſe it by borrowing upon the Civil Liſt funds.

The Civil Liſt debt was twice paid in the reign of George the Firſt. The money was granted upon the ſame plan which had been followed in the reign of Queen Anne. The Civil Liſt revenues were then mortgaged for the ſum to be raiſed, and ſtood charged with the ranſom of their own deliverance.

George the Second received an addition to his Civil Liſt. Duties were granted for the purpoſe of raiſing 800,000*l.* a year. It was not until he had reigned nineteen years, and after the laſt rebellion, that he called upon Parliament for a diſcharge of the Civil Liſt debt. The extraordinary charges brought on by the rebellion, account fully for the neceſſities of the Crown. However, the extraordinary charges of Government were not thought a ground fit to be relied on.

A deficiency of the Civil Liſt duties for ſeveral years before, was ſtated as the principal, if not the whole, ground on which an application to Parliament could be juſtified. About this time the

produce of theſe duties had fallen pretty low, and even upon an average of the whole reign never produced 800,000*l.* a year clear to the Treaſury.

That Prince reigned fourteen years afterwards: not only no new demands were made; but with ſo much good order were his revenues and expences regulated, that, although many parts of the eſtabliſhment of the Court were upon a larger and more liberal ſcale than they have been ſince, there was a conſiderable ſum in hand, on his deceaſe, amounting to about 170,000*l.* applicable to the ſervice of the Civil Liſt of his preſent Majeſty. So that, if this Reign commenced with a greater charge than uſual, there was enough, and more than enough, abundantly to ſupply all the extraordinary expence. That the Civil Liſt ſhould have been exceeded in the two former reigns, eſpecially in the reign of George the Firſt, was not at all ſurprizing. His revenue was but 700,000*l.* annually; if it ever produced ſo much clear. The prodigious and dangerous diſaffection to the very being of the eſtabliſhment, and the cauſe of a Pretender then powerfully abetted from abroad, produced many demands of an extraordinary nature both abroad and at home. Much management and great expences were neceſſary. But the throne of no Prince has ſtood upon more unſhaken foundations than that of his preſent Majeſty.

To have exceeded the ſum given for the Civil Liſt, and to have incurred a debt without ſpecial authority of Parliament, was, *prima facie*, a criminal

minal act: as ſuch, Miniſters ought naturally rather to have withdrawn it from the inſpection, than to have expoſed it to the ſcrutiny, of Parliament. Certainly they ought, of themſelves, officiouſly to have come armed with every ſort of argument, which, by explaining, could excuſe, a matter in itſelf of preſumptive guilt. But the terrors of the Houſe of Commons are no longer for Miniſters.

On the other hand, the peculiar character of the Houſe of Commons, as truſtee of the public purſe, would have led them to call with a punctilious ſolicitude for every public account, and to have examined into them with the moſt rigorous accuracy.

The capital uſe of an account is, thatthe reality of the charge, the reaſon of incurring it, and the juſtice and neceſſity of diſcharging it, ſhould all appear antecedent to the payment. No man ever pays firſt, and calls for his account afterwards; becauſe he would thereby let out of his hands the principal, and indeed only effectual, means of compelling a full and fair one. But, in national buſineſs, there is an additional reaſon for a previous production of every account. It is a check, perhaps the only one, upon a corrupt and prodigal uſe of public money. An account after payment is to no rational purpoſe an account. However, the Houſe of Commons thought all theſe to be antiquated principles; they were of opinion, that the moſt Parliamentary way of proceeding was, to pay firſt what the Court thought proper to demand, and to take its chance for

for an examination into accounts at ſome time of greater leiſure.

The nation had ſettled 800,000 *l.* a year on the Crown, as ſufficient for the ſupport of its dignity, upon the eſtimate of its own Miniſters. When Miniſters came to Parliament, and ſaid that this allowance had not been ſufficient for the purpoſe, and that they had incurred a debt of 500,000 *l.* would it not have been natural for Parliament firſt to have aſked, how, and by what means, their appropriated allowance came to be inſufficient? Would it not have ſavoured of ſome attention to juſtice, to have ſeen in what periods of Adminiſtration this debt had been originally incurred? that they might diſcover, and, if need were, animadvert on the perſons who were found the moſt culpable? To put their hands upon ſuch articles of expenditure as they thought improper or exceſſive, and to ſecure, in future, againſt ſuch miſapplication or exceeding? Accounts for any other purpoſes are but a matter of curioſity, and no genuine Parliamentary object. All the accounts which could anſwer any of theſe purpoſes were refuſed, or poſtponed by previous queſtions. Every idea of prevention was rejected, as conveying an improper ſuſpicion of the Miniſters of the Crown.

When every leading account had been refuſed, many others were granted with ſufficient facility.

But with great candour alſo, the Houſe was informed, that hardly any of them could be ready until the next ſeſſion; ſome of them perhaps not ſo ſoon. But, in order firmly to eſtabliſh the

precedent

precedent of *payment previous to account*, and to form it into a ſettled rule of the Houſe, the god in the machine was brought down, nothing leſs than the wonder-working *Law of Parliament*. It was alledged, that it is the law of Parliament, when any demand comes from the Crown, that the Houſe muſt go immediately into the Committee of Supply; in which Committee it was allowed, that the production and examination of accounts would be quite proper and regular. It was therefore carried, that they ſhould go into the Committee without delay, and without accounts, in order to examine with great order and regularity things that could not poſſibly come before them. After this ſtroke of orderly and Parliamentary wit and humour, they went into the Committee; and very generouſly voted the payment.

There was a circumſtance in that debate too remarkable to be overlooked. This debt of the Civil Liſt was all along argued upon the ſame footing as a debt of the State, contracted upon national authority. Its payment was urged as equally preſſing upon the public faith and honour: and when the whole year's account was ſtated, in what is called *The Budget*, the Miniſtry valued themſelves on the payment of ſo much public debt, juſt as if they had diſcharged 500,000*l.* of navy or exchequer bills. Though, in truth, their payment, from the Sinking Fund, of debt which was never contracted by Parliamentary authority, was, to all intents and purpoſes, ſo much debt incurred. But ſuch is the preſent notion of public credit,

credit, and payment of debt. No wonder that it produces ſuch effects.

Nor was the Houſe at all more attentive to a provident ſecurity againſt future, than it had been to a vindictive retroſpect to paſt, miſmanagements. I ſhould have thought indeed that a Miniſterial promiſe, during their own continuance in office, might have been given, though this would have been but a poor ſecurity for the publick. Mr. Pelham gave ſuch an aſſurance, and he kept his word. But nothing was capable of extorting from our Miniſters any thing which had the leaſt reſemblance to a promiſe of confining the expences of the Civil Liſt within the limits which had been ſettled by Parliament. This reſerve of theirs I look upon to be equivalent to the cleareſt declaration, that they were reſolved upon a contrary courſe.

However, to put the matter beyond all doubt, in the Speech from the Throne, after thanking Parliament for the relief ſo liberally granted, the Miniſters inform the two Houſes, that they will *endeavour* to confine the expences of the Civil Government — within what limits think you? thoſe which the law had preſcribed? Not in the leaſt — "ſuch limits as the "*honour of the* "*Crown* can poſſibly admit."

Thus they eſtabliſhed an *arbitrary* ſtandard for that dignity which Parliament had defined and limited to a *legal* ſtandard. They gave themſelves, under the lax and indeterminate idea of the *honour of the Crown*, a full looſe for all manner of diſſipation, and all manner of corruption. This arbitrary ſtandard they were not afraid to hold

out

out to both Houſes; while an idle and unoperative Act of Parliament, eſtimating the dignity of the Crown at 800,000 *l.* and confining it to that ſum, adds to the number of obſolete ſtatutes which load the ſhelves of libraries without any ſort of advantage to the people.

After this proceeding, I ſuppoſe that no man can be ſo weak as to think that the Crown is limited to any ſettled allowance whatſoever. For if the Miniſtry has 800,000 *l.* a year by the law of the land; and if by the law of Parliament all the debts which exceed it are to be paid previous to the production of any account; I preſume that this is equivalent to an income with no other limits than the abilities of the ſubject and the moderation of the Court; that is to ſay, it is ſuch an income as is poſſeſſed by every abſolute Monarch in Europe. It amounts, as a perſon of great ability ſaid in the debate, to an unlimited power of drawing upon the Sinking Fund. Its effect on the public credit of this kingdom muſt be obvious; for in vain is the Sinking Fund the great buttreſs of all the reſt, if it be in the power of the Miniſtry to reſort to it for the payment of any debts which they may chooſe to incur, under the name of the Civil Liſt, and through the medium of a Committee, which thinks itſelf obliged by law to vote ſupplies without any other account than that of the mere exiſtence of the debt.

Five hundred thouſand pounds is a ſerious ſum. But it is nothing to the prolific principle upon which the ſum was voted; a principle that may be well called, *the fruitful mother of an hundred more.*

more. Neither is the damage to public credit of very great conſequence, when compared with that which reſults to public morals and to the ſafety of the conſtitution, from the exhauſtleſs mine of corruption opened by the precedent, and to be wrought by the principle, of the late payment of the debts of the Civil Liſt. The power of diſcretionary diſqualification by one law of Parliament, and the neceſſity of paying every debt of the Civil Liſt by another law of Parliament, if ſuffered to paſs unnoticed, muſt eſtabliſh ſuch a fund of rewards and terrors as will make Parliament the beſt appendage and ſupport of arbitrary power that ever was invented by the wit of man. This is felt. The quarrel is begun between the Repreſentatives and the People. The Court faction have at length committed them.

In ſuch a ſtrait the wiſeſt may well be perplexed, and the boldeſt ſtaggered. The circumſtances are in a great meaſure new. We have hardly any land-marks from the wiſdom of our anceſtors, to guide us. At beſt we can only follow the ſpirit of their proceeding in other caſes. I know the diligence with which my obſervations on our public diſorders have been made; I am very ſure of the integrity of the motives on which they are publiſhed: I cannot be equally confident in any plan for the abſolute cure of thoſe diſorders, or for their certain future prevention. My aim is to bring this matter into more public diſcuſſion. Let the ſagacity of others work upon it. It is not uncommon for medical writers to deſcribe

deſcribe hiſtories of diſeaſes very accurately, on whoſe cure they can ſay but very little.

The firſt ideas which generally ſuggeſt themſelves, for the cure of Parliamentary diſorders, are, to ſhorten the duration of Parliaments; and to diſqualify all, or a great number of placemen, from a ſeat in the Houſe of Commons. Whatever efficacy there may be in thoſe remedies, I am ſure in the preſent ſtate of things it is impoſſible to apply them. A reſtoration of the right of free election is a preliminary indiſpenſable to every other reformation. What alterations ought afterwards to be made in the conſtitution, is a matter of deep and difficult reſearch.

If I wrote merely to pleaſe the popular palate, it would indeed be as little troubleſome to me as to another, to extol theſe remedies, ſo famous in ſpeculation, but to which their greateſt admirers have never attempted ſeriouſly to reſort in practice. I confeſs then, that I have no ſort of reliance upon either a Triennial Parliament, or a Place-bill. With regard to the former, perhaps it might rather ſerve to counteract, than to promote the ends that are propoſed by it. To ſay nothing of the horrible diſorders among the people attending frequent elections, I ſhould be fearful of committing, every three years, the independent gentlemen of the country into a conteſt with the Treaſury. It is eaſy to ſee which of the contending parties would be ruined firſt. Whoever has taken a careful view of public proceedings, ſo as to endeavour to ground his ſpeculations on his experience, muſt have obſerved how prodigiouſly

greater

greater the power of Miniſtry is in the firſt and laſt ſeſſion of a Parliament, than it is in the intermediate period, when Members ſit a little firm on their ſeats. The perſons of the greateſt Parliamentary experience, with whom I have converſed, did conſtantly, in canvaſſing the fate of queſtions, allow ſomething to the Court-ſide, upon account of the elections depending or imminent. The evil complained of, if it exiſts in the preſent ſtate of things, would hardly be removed by a triennial Parliament: for, unleſs the influence of Government in elections can be entirely taken away, the more frequently they return, the more they will harraſs private independence; the more generally men will be compelled to fly to the ſettled, ſyſtematic intereſt of Government, and to the reſources of a boundleſs Civil Liſt. Certainly ſomething may be done, and ought to be done, towards leſſening that influence in elections; and this will be neceſſary upon a plan either of longer or ſhorter duration of Parliament. But nothing can ſo perfectly remove the evil, as not to render ſuch contentions, too frequently repeated, utterly ruinous, firſt to independence of fortune, and then to independence of ſpirit. As I am only giving an opinion on this point, and not at all debating it in an adverſe line, I hope I may be excuſed in another obſervation. With great truth I may aver, that I never remember to have talked on this ſubject with any man much converſant with public buſineſs, who conſidered ſhort Parliaments as a real improvement of the conſtitution. Gentlemen, warm in a popular

cauſe,

cauſe, are ready enough to attribute all the declarations of ſuch perſons to corrupt motives. But the habit of affairs, if, on one hand, it tends to corrupt the mind, furniſhes it, on the other, with the means of better information. The authority of ſuch perſons will always have ſome weight. It may ſtand upon a par with the ſpeculations of thoſe who are leſs practiſed in buſineſs; and who, with perhaps purer intentions, have not ſo effectual means of judging. It is, beſides, an effect of vulgar and puerile malignity to imagine, that every Stateſman is of courſe corrupt; and that his opinion, upon every conſtitutional point, is ſolely formed upon ſome ſiniſter intereſt.

The next favourite remedy is a Place-bill. The ſame principle guides in both; I mean, the opinion which is entertained by many, of the infallibility of laws and regulations, in the cure of public diſtempers. Without being as unreaſonably doubtful as many are unwiſely confident, I will only ſay, that this alſo is a matter very well worthy of ſerious and mature reflexion. It is not eaſy to foreſee, what the effect would be, of diſconnecting with Parliament, the greateſt part of thoſe who hold civil employments, and of ſuch mighty and important bodies as the military and naval eſtabliſhments. It were better, perhaps, that they ſhould have a corrupt intereſt in the forms of the conſtitution, than that they ſhould have none at all. This is a queſtion altogether different from the diſqualification of a particular deſcription of Revenue Officers from ſeats in Parliament; or, perhaps, of all the lower ſorts of them from

votes in elections. In the former caſe, only the few are affected; in the latter, only the inconſiderable. But a great official, a great profeſſional, a great military and naval intereſt, all neceſſarily comprehending many people of the firſt weight, ability, wealth, and ſpirit, has been gradually formed in the kingdom. Theſe new intereſts muſt be let into a ſhare of repreſentation, elſe poſſibly they may be inclined to deſtroy thoſe inſtitutions of which they are not permitted to partake. This is not a thing to be trifled with; nor is it every well-meaning man, that is fit to put his hands to it. Many other ſerious conſiderations occur. I do not open them here, becauſe they are not directly to my purpoſe; propoſing only to give the reader ſome taſte of the difficulties that attend all capital changes in the conſtitution; juſt to hint the uncertainty, to ſay no worſe, of preventing the Court, as long as it has the means of influence abundantly in its power, of applying that influence to Parliament; and perhaps, if the public method were precluded, of doing it in ſome worſe and more dangerous method. Underhand and oblique ways would be ſtudied. The ſcience of evaſion, already tolerably underſtood, would then be brought to the greateſt perfection. It is no inconſiderable part of wiſdom, to know how much of an evil ought to be tolerated; leſt, by attempting a degree of purity impracticable in degenerate times and manners, inſtead of cutting off the ſubſiſting ill practices, new corruptions might be produced for the concealment and ſecurity of the old. It

were better, undoubtedly, that no influence at all could affect the mind of a Member of Parliament. But of all modes of influence, in my opinion, a place under the Government is the leaſt diſgraceful to the man who holds it, and by far the moſt ſafe to the country. I would not ſhut out that ſort of influence which is open and viſible, which is connected with the dignity and the ſervice of the State, when it is not in my power to prevent the influence of contracts, of ſubſcriptions, of direct bribery, and theſe innumerable methods of clandeſtine corruption, which are abundantly in the hands of the Court, and which will be applied as long as theſe means of corruption, and the diſpoſition to be corrupted, have exiſtence amongſt us. Our conſtitution ſtands on a nice equipoiſe, with ſteep precipices, and deep waters upon all ſides of it. In removing it from a dangerous leaning towards one ſide, there may be a riſque of overſetting it on the other. Every project of a material change in a Government ſo complicated as ours, combined at the ſame time with external circumſtances ſtill more complicated, is a matter full of difficulties; in which a conſiderate man will not be too ready to decide; a prudent man too ready to undertake; or an honeſt man too ready to promiſe. They do not reſpect the publick nor themſelves, who engage for more, than they are ſure that they ought to attempt, or that they are able to perform. Theſe are my ſentiments, weak perhaps, but honeſt and unbiaſſed; and ſubmitted entirely to the opinion of grave men, well affected

to the conſtitution of their country, and of experience in what may beſt promote or hurt it.

Indeed, in the ſituation in which we ſtand, with an immenſe revenue, an enormous debt, mighty eſtabliſhments, Government itſelf a great banker and a great merchant, I ſee no other way for the preſervation of a decent attention to public intereſt in the Repreſentatives, but *the interpoſition of the body of the people itſelf*, whenever it ſhall appear, by ſome flagrant and notorious act, by ſome capital innovation, that theſe Repreſentatives are going to over-leap the fences of the law, and to introduce an arbitrary power. This interpoſition is a moſt unpleaſant remedy. But, if it is a legal remedy, it is intended on ſome occaſion to be uſed; to be uſed then only, when it is evident that nothing elſe can hold the conſtitution to its true principles.

The diſtempers of Monarchy were the great ſubjects of apprehenſion and redreſs, in the laſt century; in this, the diſtempers of Parliament. It is not in Parliament alone that the remedy for Parliamentary diſorders can be compleated; hardly indeed can it begin there. Until a confidence in Government is re-eſtabliſhed, the people ought to be excited to a more ſtrict and detailed attention to the conduct of their Repreſentatives. Standards, for judging more ſyſtematically upon their conduct, ought to be ſettled in the meetings of counties and corporations. Frequent and correct liſts of the voters in all important queſtions ought to be procured.

By

By ſuch means ſomething may be done. By ſuch means it may appear who thoſe are, that, by an indiſcriminate ſupport of all Adminiſtrations, have totally baniſhed all integrity and confidence out of public proceedings; have confounded the beſt men with the worſt; and weakened and diſſolved, inſtead of ſtrengthening and compacting, the general frame of Government. If any perſon is more concerned for government and order, than for the liberties of his country; even he is equally concerned to put an end to this courſe of indiſcriminate ſupport. It is this blind and undiſtinguiſhing ſupport, that feeds the ſpring of thoſe very diſorders, by which he is frighted into the arms of that faction which contains in itſelf the ſource of all diſorders, by enfeebling all the viſible and regular authority of the State. The diſtemper is increaſed by his injudicious and prepoſterous endeavours, or pretences, for the cure of it.

An exterior Adminiſtration, choſen for its impotency, or after it is choſen purpoſely rendered impotent, in order to be rendered ſubſervient, will not be obeyed. The laws themſelves will not be reſpected, when thoſe who execute them are deſpiſed; and they will be deſpiſed, when their power is not immediate from the Crown, or natural in the kingdom. Never were Miniſters better ſupported in Parliament. Parliamentary ſupport comes and goes with office, totally regardleſs of the man, or the merit. Is Government ſtrengthened? It grows weaker and weaker; the popular torrent gains

upon it every hour. Let us learn from our experience. It is not ſupport that is wanting to Government, but reformation. When Miniſtry reſts upon public opinion, it is not indeed built upon a rock of adamant; but when it ſtands upon private humour, its ſtructure is of ſtubble, and its foundation is on quickſand. I repeat it again. He that ſupports every Adminiſtration, ſubverts all Government. As the whole buſineſs in which Courts uſually take an intereſt goes on at preſent equally well, in whatever hands, whether high or low, wiſe or fooliſh, ſcandalous or reputable; there is nothing to hold it firm to any one body of men, or to any one conſiſtent ſcheme of politicks. Nothing interpoſes, to prevent the full operation of all the caprices and all the paſſions of a Court upon the ſervants of the publick. The ſyſtem of Adminiſtration is therefore open to continual ſhocks and changes, upon the principles of the meaneſt cabal, and the moſt contemptible intrigue. Nothing can be ſolid and permanent. All good men at length fly with horrour from ſuch a ſervice. Men of rank and ability, with the ſpirit which ought to animate ſuch men in a free ſtate, while they decline the juriſdiction of dark cabal on their actions and their fortunes, will, for both, chearfully put themſelves upon their country. They will truſt an inquiſitive and diſtinguiſhing Parliament; becauſe it does enquire, and does diſtinguiſh; if they act well, they know, that in ſuch a Parliament, they will be ſupported againſt any

intrigue;

intrigue; if they act ill, they know that no intrigue can protect them. This situation, however aweful, is honourable. But in one hour, and in the self-same Assembly, without any assigned or assignable cause, to be precipitated from the highest authority to the most marked neglect, possibly into the greatest peril of life and reputation, is a situation full of danger, and destitute of honour. It will be shunned equally by every man of prudence, and every man of spirit.

Such are the consequences of the division of the Court from the Administration; and of the division of public men among themselves. By the former of these, lawful Government is undone; by the latter, all opposition to lawless power is rendered impotent. Government may in a great measure be restored, if any considerable bodies of men have honesty and resolution enough never to accept Administration, unless this garrison of *King's men*, which is stationed, as in a citadel, to controul and enslave it, be entirely broken and disbanded, and every work they have thrown up be leveled with the ground. The disposition of public men to keep this corps together, and to act under it, or to co-operate with it, is a touchstone by which every Administration ought in future to be tried. There has not been one which has not sufficiently experienced the utter incompatibility of that Faction with the public peace, and with all the ends of good Government: since, if they opposed it, they soon lost every power of serving the Crown; if they submitted to it, they

loſt all the eſteem of their country. Until Miniſters give to the publick a full proof of their entire alienation from that ſyſtem, however plauſible their pretences, we may be ſure they are more intent on the emoluments than the duties of office. If they refuſe to give this proof, we know of what ſtuff they are made. In this particular, it ought to be the electors buſineſs to look to their Repreſentatives. The electors ought to eſteem it no leſs culpable in their Member to give a ſingle vote in Parliament to ſuch an Adminiſtration, than to take an office under it; to endure it, than to act in it. The notorious infidelity and verſatility of Members of Parliament in their opinions of men and things ought in a particular manner to be conſidered by the electors in the enquiry which is recommended to them. This is one of the principal holdings of that deſtructive ſyſtem, which has endeavoured to unhinge all the virtuous, honourable, and uſeful connexions in the kingdom.

This Cabal has, with great ſucceſs, propagated a doctrine which ſerves for a colour to thoſe acts of treachery; and whilſt it receives any degree of countenance, it will be utterly ſenſeleſs to look for a vigorous oppoſition to the Court Party. The doctrine is this: That all political connexions are in their nature factious, and as ſuch ought to be diſſipated, and deſtroyed; and that the rule for forming Adminiſtrations is mere perſonal ability (on the judgement of this Cabal upon it) taken by draughts from every diviſion and denomination of public men. This decree

was ſolemnly promulgated by the head of the Court corps, the Earl of Bute himſelf, in a ſpeech which he made, in the year 1766, againſt the then Adminiſtration, the only Adminiſtration which he has ever been known directly and publicly to oppoſe.

It is indeed in no way wonderful, that ſuch perſons ſhould make ſuch declarations. That Connexion and Faction are equivalent terms, is an opinion which has been carefully inculcated at all times by unconſtitutional Stateſmen. The reaſon is evident. Whilſt men are linked together, they eaſily and ſpeedily communicate the alarm of any evil deſign. They are enabled to fathom it with common counſel, and to oppoſe it with united ſtrength. Whereas, when they lie diſperſed, without concert, order, or diſcipline, communication is uncertain, counſel difficult, and reſiſtance impracticable. Where men are not acquainted with each other's principles, nor experienced in each other's talents, nor at all practiſed in their mutual habitudes and diſpoſitions by joint efforts in buſineſs; no perſonal confidence, no friendſhip, no common intereſt, ſubſiſting among them; it is evidently impoſſible that they can act a public part with uniformity, perſeverance, or efficacy. In a connexion, the moſt inconſiderable man, by adding to the weight of the whole, has his value, and his uſe; out of it, the greateſt talents are wholly unſerviceable to the publick. No man, who is not inflamed by vain-glory into enthuſiaſm, can flatter himſelf that his ſingle, unſupported, deſultory, unſyſtematic

matic endeavours are of power to defeat the ſubtle deſigns and united Cabals of ambitious citizens. When bad men combine, the good muſt aſſociate; elſe they will fall, one by one, an unpitied ſacrifice in a contemptible ſtruggle.

It is not enough, in a ſituation of truſt in the commonwealth, that a man means well to his country; it is not enough that in his ſingle perſon he never did an evil act, but always voted according to his conſcience, and even harangued againſt every deſign which he apprehended to be prejudicial to the intereſts of his country. This innoxious and ineffectual character, that ſeems formed upon a plan of apology and diſculpation, falls miſerably ſhort of the mark of public duty. That duty demands and requires, that what is right ſhould not only be made known, but made prevalent; that what is evil ſhould not only be detected, but defeated. When the public man omits to put himſelf in a ſituation of doing his duty with effect, it is an omiſſion that fruſtrates the purpoſes of his truſt almoſt as much as if he had formally betrayed it. It is ſurely no very rational account of a man's life, that he has always acted right; but has taken ſpecial care, to act in ſuch a manner that his endeavours could not poſſibly be productive of any conſequence.

I do not wonder that the behaviour of many parties ſhould have made perſons of tender and ſcrupulous virtue ſomewhat out of humour with all ſorts of connexion in politicks. I admit that people frequently acquire in ſuch confederacies a narrow, bigoted, and proſcriptive ſpirit; that

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they are apt to ſink the idea of the general good in this circumſcribed and partial intereſt. But, where duty renders a critical ſituation a neceſſary one, it is our buſineſs to keep free from the evils attendant upon it; and not to fly from the ſituation itſelf. If a fortreſs is ſeated in an unwholeſome air, an officer of the garriſon is obliged to be attentive to his health, but he muſt not deſert his ſtation. Every profeſſion, not excepting the glorious one of a ſoldier, or the ſacred one of a prieſt, is liable to its own particular vices; which, however, form no argument againſt thoſe ways of life; nor are the vices themſelves inevitable to every individual in thoſe profeſſions. Of ſuch a nature are connexions in politicks; eſſentially neceſſary for the full performance of our public duty, accidentally liable to degenerate into faction. Commonwealths are made of families, free commonwealths of parties alſo; and we may as well affirm, that our natural regards and ties of blood tend inevitably to make men bad citizens, as that the bonds of our party weaken thoſe by which we are held to our country.

Some legiſlators went ſo far as to make neutrality in party a crime againſt the State. I do not know whether this might not have been rather to overſtrain the principle. Certain it is, the beſt patriots in the greateſt commonwealths have always commended and promoted ſuch connexions. *Idem ſentire de republica*, was with them a principal ground of friendſhip and attachment; nor do I know any other capable of forming firmer, dearer, more pleaſing, more honourable, and more

more virtuous habitudes. The Romans carried this principle a great way. Even the holding of offices together, the diſpoſition of which aroſe from chance not ſelection, gave riſe to a relation, which continued for life. It was called *neceſſitudo ſortis*; and it was looked upon with a ſacred reverence. Breaches of any of theſe kinds of civil relation were conſidered as acts of the moſt diſtinguiſhed turpitude. The whole people was diſtributed into political ſocieties, in which they acted in ſupport of ſuch intereſts in the State as they ſeverally affected. For it was then thought no crime, to endeavour by every honeſt means to advance to ſuperiority and power thoſe of your own ſentiments and opinions. This wiſe people was far from imagining that thoſe connexions had no tie, and obliged to no duty; but that men might quit them without ſhame, upon every call of intereſt. They believed private honour to be the great foundation of public truſt; that friendſhip was no mean ſtep towards patriotiſm; that he who, in the common intercourſe of life, ſhewed he regarded ſomebody beſides himſelf, when he came to act in a public ſituation, might probably conſult ſome other intereſt than his own. Never may we become *plus ſages que les ſages*, as the French comedian has happily expreſſed it, wiſer than all the wiſe and good men who have lived before us. It was their wiſh, to ſee public and private virtues, not diſſonant and jarring, and mutually deſtructive, but harmoniouſly combined, growing out of one another in a noble and orderly gradation,

gradation, reciprocally ſupporting and ſupported. In one of the moſt fortunate periods of our hiſtory this country was governed by a *connexion*; I mean, the great connexion of Whigs in the reign of Q. Anne. They were complimented upon the principle of this connexion by a poet who was in high eſteem with them. Addiſon, who knew their ſentiments, could not praiſe them for what they conſidered as no proper ſubject of commendation. As a poet who knew his buſineſs, he could not applaud them for a thing which in general eſtimation was not highly reputable. Addreſſing himſelf to Britain,

Thy favourites grow not up by fortune's ſport,
Or from the crimes or follies of a court.
On the firm baſis of deſert they riſe,
From long-try'd faith, and friendſhip's holy ties.

The Whigs of thoſe days believed that the only proper method of riſing into power was through hard eſſays of practiſed friendſhip and experimented fidelity. At that time it was not imagined, that patriotiſm was a bloody idol, which required the ſacrifice of children and parents, or deareſt connexions in private life, and of all the virtues that riſe from thoſe relations. They were not of that ingenious paradoxical morality, to imagine that a ſpirit of moderation was properly ſhewn in patiently bearing the ſufferings of your friends; or that diſintereſtedneſs was clearly manifeſted at the expence of other peoples fortune. They believed that no men could act with effect, who did not act in concert; that

that no men could act in concert, who did not act with confidence; and that no men could act with confidence, who were not bound together by common opinions, common affections, and common intereſts.

Theſe wiſe men, for ſuch I muſt call Lord Sunderland, Lord Godolphin, Lord Sommers, and Lord Marlborough, were too well principled in theſe maxims upon which the whole fabrick of public ſtrength is built, to be blown off their ground by the breath of every childiſh talker. They were not afraid that they ſhould be called an ambitious Junto; or that their reſolution to ſtand or fall together ſhould, by placemen, be interpreted into a ſcuffle for places.

Party is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national intereſt, upon ſome particular principle in which they are all agreed. For my part, I find it impoſſible to conceive, that any one believes in his own politicks, or thinks them to be of any weight, who refuſes to adopt the means of having them reduced into practice. It is the buſineſs of the ſpeculative philoſopher to mark the proper ends of Government. It is the buſineſs of the politician, who is the philoſopher in action, to find out proper means towards thoſe ends, and to employ them with effect. Therefore every honourable connexion will avow it as their firſt purpoſe, to purſue every juſt method to put the men who hold their opinions into ſuch a condition as may enable them to carry their common plans into execution, with all the power and authority

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of the State. As this power is attached to certain ſituations, it is their duty to contend for theſe ſituations. Without a proſcription of others, they are bound to give to their own party the preference in all things; and by no means, for private conſiderations, to accept any offers of power in which the whole body is not included; nor to ſuffer themſelves to be led, or to be controuled, or to be over-balanced, in office or in council, by thoſe who contradict the very fundamental principles on which their party is formed, and even thoſe upon which every fair connexion muſt ſtand. Such a generous contention for power, on ſuch manly and honourable maxims, will eaſily be diſtinguiſhed from the mean and intereſted ſtruggle for place and emolument. The very ſtile of ſuch perſons will ſerve to diſcriminate them from thoſe numberleſs impoſtors, who have deluded the ignorant with profeſſions incompatible with human practice, and have afterwards incenſed them by practices below the level of vulgar rectitude.

It is an advantage to all narrow wiſdom and narrow morals, that their maxims have a plauſible air; and, on a curſory view, appear equal to firſt principles. They are light and portable. They are as current as copper coin; and about as valuable. They ſerve equally the firſt capacities and the loweſt; and they are, at leaſt, as uſeful to the worſt men as the beſt. Of this ſtamp is the cant of *Not men, but meaſures*; a ſort of charm, by which many people get looſe from every honourable engagement. When I ſee a man acting

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this desultory and disconnected part, with as much detriment to his own fortune as prejudice to the cause of any party, I am not persuaded that he is right; but I am ready to believe he is in earnest. I respect virtue in all its situations; even when it is found in the unsuitable company of weakness. I lament to see qualities, rare and valuable, squandered away without any public utility. But when a gentleman with great visible emoluments abandons the party in which he has long acted, and tells you, it is because he proceeds upon his own judgement; that he acts on the merits of the several measures as they arise; and that he is obliged to follow his own conscience, and not that of others; he gives reasons which it is impossible to controvert, and discovers a character which it is impossible to mistake. What shall we think of him who never differed from a certain set of men until the moment they lost their power, and who never agreed with them in a single instance afterwards? Would not such a coincidence of interest and opinion be rather fortunate? Would it not be an extraordinary cast upon the dice, that a man's connexions should degenerate into faction, precisely at the critical moment when they lose their power, or he accepts a place? When people desert their connexions, the desertion is a manifest *fact*, upon which a direct simple issue lies, triable by plain men. Whether a *measure* of Government be right or wrong, is *no matter of fact*, but a mere affair of opinion, on which men may, as they do, dispute and

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wrangle without end. But whether the individual *thinks* the meaſure right or wrong, is a point at ſtill a greater diſtance from the reach of all human deciſion. It is therefore very convenient to politicians, not to put the judgement of their conduct on overt-acts, cognizable in any ordinary court, but upon ſuch matter as can be triable only in that ſecret tribunal, where they are ſure of being heard with favour, or where at worſt the ſentence will be only private whipping.

I believe the reader would wiſh to find no ſubſtance in a doctrine which has a tendency to deſtroy all teſt of character as deduced from conduct. He will therefore excuſe my adding ſomething more, towards the further clearing up a point, which the great convenience of obſcurity to diſhoneſty has been able to cover with ſome degree of darkneſs and doubt.

In order to throw an odium on political connexion, theſe politicians ſuppoſe it a neceſſary incident to it, that you are blindly to follow the opinions of your party, when in direct oppoſition to your own clear ideas; a degree of ſervitude that no worthy man could bear the thought of ſubmitting to; and ſuch as, I believe, no connexions (except ſome Court Factions) ever could be ſo ſenſeleſsly tyrannical as to impoſe. Men thinking freely, will, in particular inſtances, think differently. But ſtill, as the greater part of the meaſures which ariſe in the courſe of public buſineſs are related to, or dependent on, ſome great *leading general principles in Govern-*

ment, a man muſt be peculiarly unfortunate in the choice of his political company if he does not agree with them at leaſt nine times in ten. If he does not concur in theſe general principles upon which the party is founded, and which neceſſarily draw on a concurrence in their application, he ought from the beginning to have choſen ſome other, more conformable to his opinions. When the queſtion is in its nature doubtful, or not very material, the modeſty which becomes an individual, and (in ſpite of our Court moraliſts) that partiality which becomes a well-choſen friendſhip, will frequently bring on an acquieſcence in the general ſentiment. Thus the diſagreement will naturally be rare; it will be only enough to indulge freedom, without violating concord, or diſturbing arrangement. And this is all that ever was required for a character of the greateſt uniformity and ſteadineſs in connexion. How men can proceed without any connexion at all, is to me utterly incomprehenſible. Of what ſort of materials muſt that man be made, how muſt he be tempered and put together, who can ſit whole years in Parliament, with five hundred and fifty of his fellow citizens, amidſt the ſtorm of ſuch tempeſtuous paſſions, in the ſharp conflict of ſo many wits, and tempers, and characters, in the agitation of ſuch mighty queſtions, in the diſcuſſion of ſuch vaſt and ponderous intereſts, without ſeeing any one ſort of men, whoſe character, conduct, or diſpoſition, would lead him to aſſociate himſelf with them, to aid

and be aided in any one ſyſtem of public utility?

I remember an old ſcholaſtic aphoriſm, which ſays, "that the man who lives wholly detached "from others, muſt be either an angel or a "devil." When I ſee in any of theſe detached gentlemen of our times the angelic purity, power, and beneficence, I ſhall admit them to be angels. In the mean time we are born only to be men. We ſhall do enough if we form ourſelves to be good ones. It is therefore our buſineſs carefully to cultivate in our minds, to rear to the moſt perfect vigour and maturity, every ſort of generous and honeſt feeling that belongs to our nature. To bring the diſpoſitions that are lovely in private life into the ſervice and conduct of the commonwealth; ſo to be patriots, as not to forget we are gentlemen. To cultivate friendſhips, and to incur enmities. To have both ſtrong, but both ſelected: in the one, to be placable; in the other, immoveable. To model our principles to our duties and our ſituation. To be fully perſuaded, that all virtue which is impracticable is ſpurious; and rather to run the riſque of falling into faults in a courſe which leads us to act with effect and energy, than to loiter out our days without blame, and without uſe. Public life is a ſituation of power and energy; he treſpaſſes againſt his duty who ſleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy.

There is, however, a time for all things. It is not every conjuncture which calls with equal

force upon the activity of honeſt men; but critical exigences now and then ariſe; and I am miſtaken, if this be not one of them. Men will ſee the neceſſity of honeſt combination; but they may ſee it when it is too late. They may embody, when it will be ruinous to themſelves, and of no advantage to the country; when, for want of ſuch a timely union as may enable them to oppoſe in favour of the laws, with the laws on their ſide, they may, at length, find themſelves under the neceſſity of conſpiring, inſtead of conſulting. The law, for which they ſtand, may become a weapon in the hands of its bittereſt enemies; and they will be caſt, at length, into that miſerable alternative, between ſlavery and civil confuſion, which no good man can look upon without horror; an alternative in which it is impoſſible he ſhould take either part, with a conſcience perfectly at repoſe. To keep that ſituation of guilt and remorſe at the utmoſt diſtance, is, therefore, our firſt obligation. Early activity may prevent late and fruitleſs violence. As yet we work in the light. The ſcheme of the enemies of public tranquillity has diſarranged, it has not deſtroyed us.

If the reader believes that there really exiſts ſuch a Faction as I have deſcribed; a Faction ruling by the private inclinations of a Court, againſt the general ſenſe of the people; and that this Faction, whilſt it purſues a ſcheme for undermining all the foundations of our freedom, weakens (for the preſent at leaſt) all the powers of executory Government, rendering us abroad contemptible,

temptible, and at home diſtracted; he will believe alſo, that nothing but a firm combination of public men againſt this body, and that, too, ſupported by the hearty concurrence of the people at large, can poſſibly get the better of it. The people will ſee the neceſſity of reſtoring public men to an attention to the public opinion, and of reſtoring the conſtitution to its original principles. Above all, they will endeavour to keep the Houſe of Commons from aſſuming a character which does not belong to it. They will endeavour to keep that Houſe, for its exiſtence, for its powers, and its privileges, as independent of every other, and as dependent upon themſelves, as poſſible. This ſervitude is to an Houſe of Commons (like obedience to the Divine law) "perfect freedom." For if they once quit this natural, rational, and liberal obedience, having deſerted the only proper foundation of their power, they muſt ſeek a ſupport in an abject and unnatural dependence ſomewhere elſe. When, through the medium of this juſt connexion with their conſtituents, the genuine dignity of the Houſe of Commons is reſtored, it will begin to think of caſting from it, with ſcorn, as badges of ſervility, all the falſe ornaments of illegal power, with which it has been, for ſome time, diſgraced. It will begin to think of its old office of CONTROUL. It will not ſuffer, that laſt of evils, to predominate in the country; men without popular confidence, public opinion, natural connexion, or mutual truſt, inveſted with all the powers of Government.

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When they have learned this leſſon themſelves, they will be willing and able to teach the Court, that it is the true intereſt of the Prince to have but one Adminiſtration; and that one compoſed of thoſe who recommend themſelves to their Sovereign through the opinion of their country, and not by their obſequiouſneſs to a favourite. Such men will ſerve their Sovereign with affection and fidelity; becauſe his choice of them, upon ſuch principles, is a compliment to their virtue. They will be able to ſerve him effectually; becauſe they will add the weight of the country to the force of the executory power. They will be able to ſerve their King with dignity; becauſe they will never abuſe his name to the gratification of their private ſpleen or avarice. This, with allowances for human frailty, may probably be the general character of a Miniſtry, which thinks itſelf accountable to the Houſe of Commons; when the Houſe of Commons thinks itſelf accountable to its conſtituents. If other ideas ſhould prevail, things muſt remain in their preſent confuſion; until they are hurried into all the rage of civil violence; or until they ſink into the dead repoſe of deſpotiſm.

THE END.